

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS—DOWNTOWN EDITION
INCLUDING DUMBO

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Anna Pond looks forlornly at the backyard of her St. Marks Avenue home, where her outdoor cats, Clyde, Inky, Mookie and Blinky (not shown) once lived. Now only Mookie remains.

IT'S A CATFIGHT

P'Heights kitties caught, left in Queens

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

A family of cats has sparked a dogfight on a Prospect Heights block, with one woman claiming a neighbor absconded with her outdoor felines and dumped them in a Queens park.

The cat tale begins last fall, when four wobbly-legged kittens wandered into Anna Pond's St. Marks Avenue garden, sticking close to the fence and "peeking their miniature heads" above the grass. Pond and her husband, Paul, were smitten. They named the furballs Inky, Blinky, Mookie and Clyde.

Inky became a total lover, rolling over each time Paul approached so he could rub his belly," Pond said. "The Ponds grew so attached to their backyard kitties that they began treating them as if they were their own. They had the cats spayed and neutered. They fed them daily. When the Ponds vacationed, they had a cat-sitter watch over their finicky charges.

"They were our pets," she said. But this inter-species idyll soon came to an abrupt end. In June, the couple noticed that the cats began to disappear one by one. First Clyde, then, a week later, Inky and Blinky were missing, too.

EXCLUSIVE

Mookie was left wandering the backyard, "mewing in an unfamiliar way, like she was crying," said Pond.

The couple confronted its neighbor, who admitted to trapping cats and releasing them in Queens.

The neighbor agreed to speak with The Brooklyn Paper as long as her name was not published. She defended her actions as neighborly.

"When I saw five stray cats living in my backyard... I did extensive research to figure out how I could bring them to be sterilized," said the neighbor. "All anyone could offer was to come and sterilize the cats. But I would have to first trap the cats and provide a space for them to recover from the surgery. I was not willing to do that. It was too laborious."

Meanwhile, the cats were diminishing her quality of life. She said that she found carcasses of dead birds in her garden. Her 5-year-old grandson was afraid to venture into the backyard.

"I personally don't think cats should be allowed outside to be exposed to cat AIDS, or to get maimed by other cats," she said. "If I wanted a cat, I would have a cat and I would keep it in my house."

See CATS on page 13

HIP-HOP FEST FLAP

'Park' rapper's delight barred for Bard

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

A production of Shakespeare's "Macbeth" will replace a hip-hop festival next summer in a DUMBO venue controlled by the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy — and organizers of the rap show believe that race played a role.

The Brooklyn Hip-Hop Festival — which brought thousands of people and big-name rappers to the park-and-condo waterfront development site in 2006 and 2007 — had already scheduled its 2008 production for the weekend of June 22.

But organizers were shocked last month to discover that the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy had given those days to St. Ann's Warehouse to

stage a Polish rendition of that Scottish play.

Festival organizers believe the move was racially motivated. "Hip hop brings a lot more brown people to this neighborhood, and people who live here are not comfortable with it," said Wes Jackson, whose Room Service Production founded the festival in 2005.

"[People have told me that residents say], 'The festival should be in Commodore Barry Park between the projects and the BQE, not next to my \$2.5-million condo.'"

Whether racially motivated or not, the rejection of the hip-hop festival sounds very much like the scenario long imagined by critics of Brooklyn Bridge Park, where condo and commercial devel-

opment will finance greenspace along a 1.3-mile stretch from DUMBO to the foot of Atlantic Avenue. Opponents believe that public events will not be public at all, but subject to the whims of the wealthy condo-dwellers whose maintenance fees will pay for the park's upkeep.

"What we have feared all along is that the Conservancy, which has received enormous amounts of financial support from Brooklyn Heights residents, will run the park for their benefit and not the benefit of residents of other neighborhoods," said Roy Sloane, a former president of the Cobble Hill Association.

"[People who live near Brooklyn Bridge Park] want quiet, low-traffic events. And that means Shakespeare over hip hop," Sloane said.

See BARD RAP on page 13



A "Celebrity Moving" truck parked outside Heath and Michelle's townhouse.

Heath hits the road

Michelle to stay in Boerum Hill

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

It looks official: Michelle got the townhouse.

The amicable rift in Brooklyn's A-list couple — Heath Ledger and Michelle Williams — has ended with the Aussie heartthrob apparently moving his former lover.

"He's long gone, but she's still here," one of Williams' neighbors told The Brooklyn Paper, who requested anonymity because he's still her neighbor.

"She looks a lot happier than she did before," he added.

Neighbors started buzzing about the

couple's relocation to Spittsville last week, when a van from Celebrity Moving — we are not making that up — pulled up at Ledger and Williams' former haven.

If it was a publicity stunt by the moving company, its employees weren't talking.

A manager at the Long Island City-based movers, who gave only the name "Tony," said he wouldn't discuss the celebrities that Celebrity Movers allegedly services.

But he did shoot down the idea that the company parked one of its 11 trucks



Kick it!

Kristen Baker of the John Cougar Mellencamps showed great form in this shot, but she was roughed up for several runs in the team's loss to the Non-Committals in the Brooklyn Kidball playoffs on Sunday. See page 4 for full coverage.

Ebbets Field memories are being preserved... at local McDonald's

THE LAST GAME EVER played at Ebbets Field was on Sept. 24, 1957 — exactly 50 years ago Monday.

The Dodgers won, but the joy of the crowd of just 6,700 people was extremely short-lived. You don't need to be a historian to recall what happened next: The team left, the beloved stadium was torn down, a four housing project was built on the site, and whatever flame still flickered with the hope that the inner city would survive the loss of the Dodgers and their fans was extinguished.

So forgive me for being a little sentimental, but on Monday, I wandered over to the place where that last game was played and where Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier expecting something to be happening. A few old guys pointing at the hallowed ground and muttering about a great Pete Reiser catch; an official from Major League Baseball making a speech about The Game; or perhaps a baseball historian or two giving a tour.

But, nothing. Instead, what I found was a Brooklyn as distant from

THE BROOKLYN ANGLE By Gersh Kuntzman
BUMMED OUT

Pee Wee and Duke and Preacher and Osk as the Earth is from a star on Orion's belt.

There's no evidence that anything, let alone one of the most significant moments in civil rights, happened on what is now a cement plaza bounded by Bedford Avenue, Sullivan Street, McKee Place and Montgomery Street.

Ebbets Field exists only in the mind of the graying men and women who abandoned it long before the Dodgers did. Across Sullivan Street from what was the Ebbets Field entrance is a portal so beautiful that the Mets are re-creating it at their new stadium in Queens — is now a commercial laundry and an auto-body shop.

WHEN "CAMPY" ONCE climbed the backstop to catch foul pop-ups is a little jungle gym. There's a tiny little plaque,



On the 50th anniversary of the final game at Ebbets Field, Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries (left, outside the Ebbets Field Apartments) called on Major League Baseball to do more to support Brooklyn ballplayers.

hidden by bushes, that marks the "site" of Ebbets Field. But it's physically in the cheap seats in right field. And how's this for irony: There's even a sign that reads, "No ball playing."

The only real collection of Ebbets Field memorabilia or memories is on the walls of the McDonald's across McKee from the former entrance. Dozens of photos from the Dodgers' glory days, almost all of them featuring Jackie Robinson, are there, though few customers pay them much attention.

So it has come down to this: McDonald's is the only keeper of the Dodgers' flame at the very place where it burned.

Perhaps that's to be expected

when a chain burger joint is the cleanest restaurant in the neighborhood, and the Dodgers play happily in Los Angeles, 3,000 miles from the door housing project built to replace them.

"I didn't even know today was the anniversary of the last game," said Maxwell Moreau, an Ebbets Field security guard who hails from Haiti. "No one told me anything."

MAXWELL SAID THAT old men show up from time to time and look for any remnant of their old stomping grounds. "But I never know what to tell them. I have no connection to that," he said, standing in front of a Yankee logo that someone hanged (heresy?)

See DEM BUMS on page 6

Nazi symbols litter Heights

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

Vandals spray-painted at least 19 swastikas and left anti-Semitic flyers all over Brooklyn Heights in a blitz on Monday night a few hours after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speeded anti-Semitic rhetoric in a speech at Columbia University — and many believe there is a connection.

"The visit of Ahmadinejad, the little Hitler, brings the anti-Semites out of the woodwork," Assemblyman Dov Hikind (D-Borough Park) said at a hastily called press conference on Remen Street on Tuesday.

Councilman Bill DeBlasio (D-Park Slope) agreed that "it's hard to



Rabbi Aaron Raskin surveys swastika painted on the steps of Congregation B'nai Avraham in Brooklyn Heights.



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Our second annual Genius Smackdown is on PAGE 13

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The Brooklyn Paper

HERE TO GO

EDITORS' PICKS

SATURDAY September 29	SUNDAY September 30	TUESDAY October 2	THURSDAY October 4	FRIDAY October 5
Show us your mitts For the fourth year in a row, Bubby's will host its "Pie Social," which lets local bakers show off their baking skills. The entry fee gets you five slices, but if you need more, check out "Bubby's Homemade Pies," the restaurant's new cookbook. Stick to it Head down to 80th Street this afternoon to watch the Brooklyn Stickball Old Timers play their 39th annual game. Drawing players who have left Brooklyn for far-off lands like Florida and Connecticut, as well as revelers from the Ragamuffin Parade, this group isn't as competitive as it once was, but still plays a great game. Sackett to us Fort Greene's favorite drama club, the Sackett Group, is kicking off its new season with performances of the Pulitzer-prize-winning drama "No Place to Be Somebody," helmed by big shot director Woodie King, Jr. The show's affordable and entertaining, so drop in and get yourself some culture. Apple in stereo Eustice Tilly and all of his friends — including songstress and reported Jonathan Ames girlfriend Fiona Apple (pictured), and vintage noise rockers Yo La Tengo — stop by the Brooklyn Lyceum to talk about pop music as part of this year's New Yorker Festival.	Get your goat Tonight, the Mountain Goats will roam free in Brooklyn. The California-based band, made up of John Danielle, Peter Hughes and a rotating cast of other goats, will hit Studio 8 to test out songs from their forthcoming record. Apple in stereo Eustice Tilly and all of his friends — including songstress and reported Jonathan Ames girlfriend Fiona Apple (pictured), and vintage noise rockers Yo La Tengo — stop by the Brooklyn Lyceum to talk about pop music as part of this year's New Yorker Festival.	Sackett to us Fort Greene's favorite drama club, the Sackett Group, is kicking off its new season with performances of the Pulitzer-prize-winning drama "No Place to Be Somebody," helmed by big shot director Woodie King, Jr. The show's affordable and entertaining, so drop in and get yourself some culture. Apple in stereo Eustice Tilly and all of his friends — including songstress and reported Jonathan Ames girlfriend Fiona Apple (pictured), and vintage noise rockers Yo La Tengo — stop by the Brooklyn Lyceum to talk about pop music as part of this year's New Yorker Festival.	Sackett to us Fort Greene's favorite drama club, the Sackett Group, is kicking off its new season with performances of the Pulitzer-prize-winning drama "No Place to Be Somebody," helmed by big shot director Woodie King, Jr. The show's affordable and entertaining, so drop in and get yourself some culture. Apple in stereo Eustice Tilly and all of his friends — including songstress and reported Jonathan Ames girlfriend Fiona Apple (pictured), and vintage noise rockers Yo La Tengo — stop by the Brooklyn Lyceum to talk about pop music as part of this year's New Yorker Festival.	Sackett to us Fort Greene's favorite drama club, the Sackett Group, is kicking off its new season with performances of the Pulitzer-prize-winning drama "No Place to Be Somebody," helmed by big shot director Woodie King, Jr. The show's affordable and entertaining, so drop in and get yourself some culture. Apple in stereo Eustice Tilly and all of his friends — including songstress and reported Jonathan Ames girlfriend Fiona Apple (pictured), and vintage noise rockers Yo La Tengo — stop by the Brooklyn Lyceum to talk about pop music as part of this year's New Yorker Festival.

THE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal Jay

SAT, SEPT. 29

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
CRUISING THE GOWANUS: Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment hosts a cruise with Dan Willey. See the changes at the canal and its neighborhood experience a Renaissance. \$50. 540 members. 9:30 am–noon. Meet at Fulton Ferry Landing, foot of Old Fulton Street, opposite the River Café. (718) 788-8500, ext. 208.
BROOKLYN BRIDGE WALK: Big Onion Tours takes a walk over the bridge and through Brooklyn Heights. \$15. \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 11 am. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, lower Manhattan. (212) 439-1090.
LULLWATER EXPLORATION: Enjoy a boat tour visiting Prospect Park, from prehistoric times to the present day, while touring one of Prospect Park's most scenic habitats. \$10. \$6 kids. 11:52 am. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400.
BIRDWATCHING CRUISE: Learn about the history of Prospect Park, from prehistoric times to the present day, while touring one of Prospect Park's most scenic habitats. \$10. \$6 kids. 11:52 am. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400.
DISCOVER TOURS: Explore the secrets of nature in Prospect Park. \$10. \$6 kids. 11:52 am. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400.
MOONLIGHT FLASHLIGHT AND FOOTLIGHTS: Annual Green-Wood Cemetery tour. Walk features live accordion music to the Catoctons and more. Bring a flashlight. \$20. 6:15 pm. Meet at main gate, Fifth Avenue and 55th Street. (631) 549-4891.

PERFORMANCE
RYAN REPP: "A Time of Beauty" by Maurice Berger. \$12, \$10 12 and younger. 2 pm and 5 pm. Ryan Repertory Company's Jonathan Rosenbaum Performing Arts Space, 2445 Bath Ave. (718) 990-4800.
BAM: Royal Shakespeare Company's "King Lear." \$30, \$25, \$15, \$10, \$5. 7:30 pm. BAM. (718) 990-4800.
GALLERY PLAYERS: presents "Six Degrees of Separation." \$18. \$14 children and seniors. 2 pm and 8 pm. 199 14th St., between Fourth and Fifth avenues. (212) 352-3101.
CONCERT ON THE PLAZA: Paul Shapiro's Ribs and Bones. Enjoy 1960s-style Jewish jazz, Yiddish swing, and kosher-style blues. 4 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Green-Wood branch on Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2211.
SUPER SHOW: Celine Dion's All-Star Show. 8:11 pm. Celine Dion. 1801 Bath Ave. Call for info. (718) 734-7060.
MUSICAL: St. John's Church presents a fundraiser "An American Songbook," featuring music by Gershwin, Porter, and others. \$15 includes refreshments. 7 pm. 99th Street and Fort Hamilton Parkway. (718) 745-2377.
BARGE MUSIC: presents a classical music concert, featuring the work of Britten, Dohnányi and Dvorak. \$40, \$25 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2053.
FACULTY SHOWCASE: Brooklyn Conservatory of Music presents Roger Lantz's octet. \$10, \$5 students and seniors. 8 pm. 58 Seventh Ave. (718) 622-3300.

OTHER
CONFERENCE: Global Manifestations and The National Black Leadership Initiative on AIDS host "Breaking the Silence on HIV/AIDS: Healing the Black Community." Pre-registration necessary. Conference begins.

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CIVIC CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 3
 Community Board 2, Health, Environment and Social Services Commission. Brooklyn Hospital (121 DuSable Ave., at St. Felix Street, in Fort Greene), 6 pm. Call (718) 986-5410.
 Town Hall meeting hosted by Councilwoman Letitia James. On the agenda: Town disbursement, Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church (85 S. Oxford St., at Lafayette Avenue, in Fort Greene), 6 pm. Call (718) 788-7081.

THURSDAY, OCT. 4
 Friends of Carroll Park. Monthly meeting. Park House Carroll Street between Smith and Court streets, in Carroll Gardens. 7:30 pm. Call (718) 625-2571.

FRIDAY, OCT. 5
 Columbus Parade. Route runs on 18th Avenue, from 61st Street to 84th Street, in Bensonhurst. Begins at 1 pm. Call (718) 259-2828.

SATURDAY, OCT. 6
 Columbus Parade. Route runs on 18th Avenue, from 61st Street to 84th Street, in Bensonhurst. Begins at 1 pm. Call (718) 259-2828.

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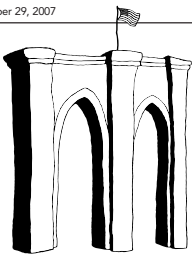
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BAY RIDGE Bay Ridge Paper, Bensonhurst Paper.
KENSINGTON-MIDWOOD Midwood Paper, Kensington Paper, Ocean Parkway Paper.
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THE STOOP

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS-DOWNTOWN DUMBO

Invasion of the film crew

George Clooney and Brad Pitt have invaded the neighborhood to film their latest flick, the Coen Brothers' "Burn After Reading," and I, for one, can't wait for the Hollywood heartthrobs to hit the road.

It's impossible to not have noticed the throngs of production vehicles dominating our streets. From trailers on Cadman Plaza and Hicks Street to the elaborate craft service set-up — complete with a wrought-iron barbeque — on Clark Street, the whole thing is a major eyesore and a parking nightmare.

HEIGHTS LOWDOWN

Juliana Bunim

The epicenter of the filming is on State Street between Clinton and Court streets, where several houses have already been painted shades of red, yellow and blue to transform them into proper Georgetown residences. If you're walking to the Hillside dog park this Tuesday, there will be flaming pyrotechnics and bloody (well, fake-bloody) bodies on Midthall Street, according to a flyer from the film's production company, Gramercy Productions.

"An aftermath of a T-bone crash," will be shot on the street, between Hicks and Willow streets, the flyer said. Of course filming requires an entourage of support vehicles, which means the west side of Hicks between Orange and Poplar Streets will be blocked off as well.

"It's absolutely ridiculous and over-the-top," said local Neil Thayer. "They've held spots on Hicks Street for two weeks already. It's really taking advantage of the residents."

If sympathy is what you're after, don't look to the mayor's office. "It should be remembered that parking is paid for and shared by all New Yorkers, including the 100,000 who work in the entertainment industry," said Julianne Cho, who runs the Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting.

Not to mention, said Cho, that filming provides jobs for many of our fellow New Yorkers. When major celebrities are involved, productions are much bigger, which translates to more streets blocked off and more jobs.

So am I heartless for wishing productions could jump across the river to Caphtan? If so, I'm not the only callous local.

"The whole neighborhood has been calling about parking," said Irene Junner, the office manager at the BHA.

Extensive filming puts a real pressure on the neighborhood to absorb all of the displaced cars, especially since parking is already a problem. Add another commercial production — for Electrolix vacuums — that blocked off chunks of Columbia Heights during Tuesday's street sweeping last week, and parking gets especially hairy.

We already have such an issue with government employees who park with placards in places where regular tax-paying people could park," said Stanton. "So much parking is now blocked off, but there is very little I can do to appease residents."

No wonder many neighborhoods have gotten temporary moratoria on filming. It's time to renew ours.

The big reason that so much filming goes on in the neighborhood is because residents make their homes available to film crews. Once property owners give the OK to use their homes, it's very easy for the production company to get a permit from the mayor's office.

"Homeowners need to know that when they're approached by a location scout, it might seem glamorous, but they need to be considerate about what it means to their neighbors around the corner and the next corner," said Stanton.

"The homeowners might be getting a nice location fee, but they should think about what it means to everyone else who is not getting paid off."

Unfortunately, the film office's concern for our local parking plight amounts to a pile of bitter beans.

"One way we try to balance the needs of the neighborhood with the needs of the production is through our Starbucks residence appreciation program," said Cho. "We will work with the production to hand out free cups of coffee to the neighborhood to remind them this drives employment."

The only thing I've been handed is a parking citation.

Juliana Bunim is a writer who lives in Brooklyn Heights.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Our do-gooder friends at the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service just unveiled a new Web site for an employment program that finds jobs for adults with disabilities. Check it out at www.bklynmail.org. ... Over at the Brooklyn Historical Society on Pierrepont Street, there'll be free architectural tours on Oct. 6 and 7 as part of the annual open house weekend. ... Grandmothers were spotted in Downtown Brooklyn wearing shirts declaring, "Arrest Bush." The ladies were part of the **Granny Peace Brigade**. ... Kudos to the guys at **Front Street Pizzeria** in DUMBO for rolling out their new "taco slice," a delectable mound of ground beef, cheese, tomato and sour cream on a normal pizza crust. Yes, it sounds like you'll come down with a case of Markovitch's Revenge, but it is an amazing slice. The \$3.50 price may sound steep, but it keeps you full for two days. ... Get a **free flu shot** from the Visiting Nurse Service from noon to 5 pm on Oct. 2 outside of 15 Metrotech in Downtown Brooklyn. ... The Sink dropped in at **DUMBO Fight Night** at St. Ann's Warehouse last week, had the curly chicken and was up half the night with what DUMBO locals call "Tucker Reed's Revenge." Run into **Two Trees** underkind **Jed Valentas** at the charity event. He was sporting a Rolling Stones T-shirt and about three days of beard stubble, and told his he can't wait to read Alan Greenman's new book. "He's a great man," Valentas said of the laissez-faire regulator. ... **Borough President Markovitch** still isn't ready to commit to running for mayor. At a press conference on Monday, the Boop told The Sink, "Everyday I go back and forth, yes, no, maybe. But the clock is ticking. I wish we weren't term-limited."

E-mail: Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

Heights stands in for D.C.



Gawkers lined Hicks and Clark streets on Wednesday (right) to see George Clooney, who is filming a new Coen Brothers film. But the crowd had to settle for John Malkovich (left) who was, um, being John Malkovich. Several buildings on State Street (center) were renovated to look like Washington, D.C., much to the chagrin of Heights loyalists.

By Adam F. Hutton

The Brooklyn Paper

With a little bit of paint, some movie magic and the blessing of the historic preservation society, directors Joel and Ethan Coen transformed State Street into Georgetown.

Not only did the big-screen brothers paint three brownstones pastel colors, but they also built two phony facades on existing buildings, added decorative shutters on several others and built a brick wall out of plywood to make the Heights look more like the Washington, D.C. neighborhood that is the setting for their upcoming film, "Burn After Reading."

Some local residents were ticked off, not just because the production has already robbed the block of most of its parking spaces, but also because they didn't like the idea of Brooklyn standing in for someplace else.

"In the beginning, everyone was asking 'Why don't they film in Georgetown?'" said Brooklyn Heights resident Ken Gross, who has lived on the State Street block between Clinton and Court for 42 years.

"But it's only temporary and the movie people have been very nice."

And the movie people love the locals too.

"The people of State Street have been wonderful," said Kat

Delaney, Location Assistant for the film.

Delaney said transforming Brooklyn Heights was easier than dragging the whole production to Georgetown for one shoot — not that it was her decision.

"It was the brothers' choice," Delaney said. "They live in New York, we're only shooting at this location for three days, so why go to Georgetown for three days when we're using a studio here?"

The movie will start filming on State Street next week and stars Brad Pitt, George Clooney, John Malkovich and Frances McDormand. The shooting on State Street will start on Monday and wrap up by Friday, when everything will go back to normal.

"They finish shooting and then we'll start tearing everything down — I mean, we'll start carefully deconstructing everything — the following Monday," said Paul Weathered, a set dresser for the film.

Filming actually started a few blocks away this week on Hicks Street between Love Lane and Clark Street. On Wednesday, gawkers of both sexes waited patiently for a glimpse of their favorite heartthrob — Clooney (Pitt wasn't on set). The rubbernecks were disappointed though: when Clooney emerged from the interior set for a lunch break, he was whisked away in a car.

Malkovich, by contrast, was friendly with the crowd, posing for a picture with one fan between takes and hanging around on the street with the commentators when he wasn't on camera.

Barbara Edwards DeLemon, whose Hicks Street home is being used for the shoot, has been pleased with the result so far. She has a new kitchen out of the deal, plus the grips repaired her parlor.

She and her husband got to meet all the stars of the film, "though of course they are very busy filming," DeLemon said.

— with Anne Smythe

Valentas gets soaked

But DUMBO fundraiser called a success



DUMBO Improvement District Executive Director Tucker Reed manned the dunk tank at "fight night" last week. Reed, like developer David Valentas, got dunked, but declared the break-even fundraiser a "success."

By Adam F. Hutton

The Brooklyn Paper

Even though they didn't make any money, organizers of last week's "fight night" fundraiser for DUMBO are calling it a success.

"DUMBO Fight Night" did pack St. Ann's Warehouse with parties last Thursday, but even at \$50 a ticket, the event was break-even at best, said Tucker Reed, executive director of the DUMBO Improvement District.

His goal was to raise awareness for DUMBO, that once-industrial, now uber-hip neighborhood between the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges. It's a neighborhood of old warehouses that are rapidly being converted to luxury apartments, squeezing out many of the artists and residential pioneers who put the area on the map in the first place.

In hopes of preserving the neighborhood's "character," several groups are backing an effort to make DUMBO a historic district.

So even if the event — which featured live music, dance performances and a boxing card complete with fighters from Gleason's Gym — didn't raise big money, it did remind people about the need for "preservation of the historic character and the artistic community in DUMBO," Reed said.

It was also, of course, for people who wanted to send real-estate titan David Valentas splashing into the dunk tank.

"I think I got the worst of it," said Reed, who also volunteered said. "But we were all good sports about getting dunked."

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THE STOOP

CARROLL GARDENS-COBBLE HILL BOERUM HILL RED HOOK

Crime ain't new but it hits hard

I received the phone call from a friend on Sunday afternoon. The Bait and Tackle bar — an epicenter of Red Hook drinking life where I've been known to down a lager or two — had been robbed. A mutual friend was opening the Van Brunt Street watering hole at 2 pm when two men came in and asked to use the bathroom. One of the thugs shoved a gun into her mouth and the other tied her up with duct tape as they emptied the cash register, according to my friend, who had been bartending there the night before.



Ariella Cohen

The whole thing took about 15 minutes. I am not naive enough to think that the attack was something completely abnormal. Unfortunately, we all know such brutal acts happen from time to time in this city. It is more rare, however, that such a crime happens within the landscape of my own life.

The geography of class has allowed me to live mostly within a safe Red Hook, not the broken-glass-strewn area near the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway where most of the neighborhood's crime happens, according to police.

Still, the Bait and Tackle robbery wasn't my first brush with Red Hook's rough side. Last year, a man who lived in the apartment above mine was stabbed to death in his living room. I was at a birthday party the night he was killed and found out only the next day to a detective investigating our building for ches.

The gunshot told me that my upstairs neighbor been a drug dealer, his murder was likely related to that trade. My landlord told me that the man had been there for many years. A few months later, a young couple — painters with an adorable French bulldog — moved into his apartment. Last year, I attended their wedding.

It still disturbs me that I can't picture the face of the man who lived there before Ariella and Paul, a man who lived and died in a different world than us, though we shared the same front door. When I moved to that apartment, my landlord Lucy was ecstatic. She saw me — a college-educated, employed person willing to pay \$1,400 for a two-bedroom hole with rooms so dim and narrow they resembled

airport corridors — as a sign of progress. "We are happy things are changing here and new people are coming," she had said, adding that the change made her feel safer.

Her comment chilled me. I felt the flash of guilt that comes with knowing you are part of a change that is inevitably about people with more money displacing people with less. This week, I remembered Lucy's comment, and our dead neighbor, as I thought about my friend, who hasn't returned to Van Brunt Street since her assault.

We live in a city of neighborhoods and within each neighborhood, there are multiple geographies. They are all safe and unsafe, depending on the hour and the day. Lucy may be less likely to be robbed now than she was 10 years ago, but that doesn't mean that she or I exist in a safe Red Hook. None of us does. And no one ever will, until everyone does.

Ariella Cohen is a staff reporter for *The Brooklyn Paper*.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Red Hook has lost its good name: That weirdly non-local Red Hook IPA we see all over the place has been renamed "Long Hammer IPA." The Chicago-based brewer who makes the "topsy drinkable IPA," declined to comment on the decision to trade in Brooklyn's best neighborhood name for a moniker that reminds the Sink of a pom star.

Two eco-friendly additions are coming to a neighborhood long known for car-burning arsonists and smog. This fall, real-estate developer Greg O'Connell will convert old water towers into energy-generating windmills. The windmills, which will churn on Van Dyke Street between Conover and Ferris streets, will create enough power to light up the public pier next to Fairway.

O'Connell said the windmill



Linda Tool & Dye, in Red Hook, will replace its roof with an eco-friendly design. Owner Michael DiMarino and Chris Sheppard from SWBDC show it off.



Construction of the Ikea store on Beard Street in Red Hook continues. Bus service to the site will begin in January, months before the store actually opens.

MTA extends itself for Ikea

Bus routes lengthened to service Hook anchor store

By Ariella Cohen

The Brooklyn Paper

Take your flat pack on the bus.

New York City Transit has agreed to reroute the B61 and the B77 bus lines next year so they stop at a corner of Red Hook that is fast turning blue — Ikea blue.

The B61 — which travels through Cobble Hill and western Carroll Gardens before terminating at the intersection of Van Brunt and Beard Street, two blocks west of the site — will stop in front of the store's entrance at the intersection of Beard and Columbia streets.

The same spot will also be a stop for the B77, which travels west on Ninth Street from Park Slope to Red Hook and currently terminates one block north of the site at Loraine and Dykeman streets.

The new bus stops could reduce what is generally expected to be an influx of car traffic to the store, which will open next spring, according to Charles Seaton, a spokesman for MTA NYC Transit.

"This will allow a large number of people to reach [Ikea] without using a car," said Seaton. The extension of Red Hook's two bus

lines has been on the drawing board since 2003, when the city gave Ikea permission to build the superstore over the cries of residents who fear the traffic congestion it will bring. Ikea will also introduce its own private shuttle bus to famously transit-starved Red Hook. The private shuttle will stop at subway stations in Brooklyn, connecting riders on the 2, 3, 4, 5, A, C, E, M, N, and R subway lines to the store, which will be the country's largest.

Even with these new transit choices, the superstore is expected on a busy day to attract 11,000 cars, 100 trucks and several commuter ferries.

Accident-prone BQE now has its own blog

By Ariella Cohen

The Brooklyn Paper

The only thing worse than being stuck on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway is being stuck living next to it and now it's inspired its own blog!

Werner Cohn, who lives on Hicks Street between Amity and Congress streets overlooking six-lanes of BQE chaos in Cobble Hill, has declared (online) war against the commuting crimes he sees out his living room window.

"The truth is, this highway was built before they knew how to build highways," said the 81-year-old retired sociologist, who blogs at bqevanah.blogspot.com. The Web site's subtitle is "Fatalities Waiting to Happen."

Cohn, who also blogs about another neighbor, Long Island City Hospital, is not merely venting. His goal, he says, is



Cobble Hill resident Werner Cohn has gotten so obsessed with the BQE that he blogs about it.

prevention. "Are we going to wait for something terrible to happen to do something about it? I'll be minding my own business in the house. Then all of a sudden, I'll hear emergency vehicles, police and sirens, and I look out and boom, there was an accident."

In the last month, Cohn claims to have seen five such crashes within the half-mile of road that surrounds the very

tricky Congress Street entrance. The frequency of the accidents vexes him. Now, however, he believes he has stumbled onto a fast fix: a true acceleration lane.

"The way it is now, I don't use that entrance. Friends of mine don't use that entrance. This will make it a lot safer," he said.

Cohn believes that the state Department of Transportation may like the idea, described in a sketch posted on his blog. "It's an affordable way to solve a dangerous intersection," he said.

Already the blog has gotten people talking. In response to letters from Cohn and Assemblywoman Joan Millman (D-Cobble Hill), a spokesman for the state DOT promised the agency would study improving the entrance. State engineers plan to install an advisory sign warning drivers to slow down as they approach the route's curve, and new lane markings, the spokesman said.

The white-haired blogger learned about virtual activism from his son, architect Jonathan Cohn, who writes about Atlantic Yards and other development at brooklynnews.blogspot.com.

This tree finally took notice of its apple. "I didn't understand what he was doing all the time with the computer until I started to do it, too," he said.

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Red Hook rooftop is turning green

By Ariella Cohen

The Brooklyn Paper

Two eco-friendly additions are coming to a neighborhood long known for car-burning arsonists and smog.

This fall, real-estate developer Greg O'Connell will convert old water towers into energy-generating windmills. The windmills, which will churn on Van Dyke Street between Conover and Ferris streets, will create enough power to light up the public pier next to Fairway.

O'Connell said the windmill



Linda Tool & Dye, in Red Hook, will replace its roof with an eco-friendly design. Owner Michael DiMarino and Chris Sheppard from SWBDC show it off.

should be complete by spring. "The towers are beautiful structures from an industrial past and the location is perfect for a windmill," said O'Connell. "Green energy is a good match for Red Hook."

Just a few blocks from the waterfront on a gritty corner of Dwight and Coffey Streets, factory owner Mike DiMarino has come to the same conclusion as O'Connell. This year he will replace the tar and gravel top on his

two-story Linda Tool and Dye metal fabrication factory with a lushly planted "green roof." A green roof is a contained layer of foliage put on top of building that insulates the structure and absorbs rainwater that would otherwise run into sewers (which, in Brooklyn, are prone to overflowing).

DiMarino's new roof was funded by a \$250,000 grant from Rep. Nydia Velázquez (D-Red Hook).

"We hope that the city will look to the data that is collected and see the viability of these roofs," said Chris Sheppard of Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation, the non-profit that will administer the grant.

The green roof is projected to cost \$14 a square-foot, significantly more than a conventional tar beach. But DiMarino believes the payoff will come from reduced heating and cooling bills — and of course, less water heading towards the sewers that overflow on rainy days. He estimates the roof will absorb 500,000 gallons per year.

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THE stoop

FORT GREENE-CLINTON HILL

These 3 guys need space

Wanted: big space. Time frame: now. The three founders of a nearly finished Fort Greene music venue and art gallery that the city intends to raze to make way for a new home for a Manhattan dance group need to find a new home of their own — now.

The ideal space would be in Fort Greene, toward Downtown, about 6,000 finished square feet, and market rent," said Philip McKenzie, one of the three partners behind Amber Art and Music Space. "Right now, time is one of our worst enemies."

There's little question that McKenzie and his partners are in a pickle. The three Fort Greene- and Clinton Hill-based entrepreneurs had invested two years, and more than \$1 million — including more than \$200,000 in rent — fixing up a derelict building at the corner of Ashland Place and Fulton Street. But on Aug. 21, they were told that the city wants to condemn their space to make way for a home for Dancepace Project, which will serve as the centerpiece of the BAM Cultural District — a.k.a. Brooklyn's own Lincoln Center.

The three men do not own the building, but rather have a 10-year lease with Juan Lopez, who also owns Best Buy Wines and Spirits across the street. Because they are merely renters, they have no bargaining power with the city. But to one told them they were investing in a site that would soon be condemned.

There is a lot of evidence that Lopez knew about this," said McKenzie. "There were public notices that went out in 2004."

The city also claims that it sent notices to all landowners in the footprint of the Cultural District. But Lopez told Greene Acres that he found out about the imminent use of eminent domain the same time the owners of Amber did. "Two weeks ago."

"Am I going to be stupid enough to rent it knowing it will be condemned?" said Lopez.

GREENE ACRES



Dana Rubinstein



Activists in Fort Greene blocked off two parking spaces on Myrtle Avenue and declared them a park — for a day.

Finding a park in space

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

Hey, drivers: take a hike! That was the message last Friday, when activists commandeered two parking spots in front of Joseph Tyler Salon on Myrtle Avenue and carpeted them with sod as part of a nationwide Parking Day, an event designed to emphasize how much public space in this country is given over to the automobile.

The so-called Adami Park, named for a family of Myrtle Avenue merchants, covered two parking spots between Washington and Waverly avenues, and was a remarkably alluring sliver of greenspace amid the surrounding din of construction on the rapidly developing avenue. Passersby were drawn to the shock of thick, green grass, and a few hesitantly stepped onto the itchy-bitty greensward, where the activists had arranged two small tables, nine chairs, and a long wooden bench. A nursery's worth of

potted plants anchored the grass to the road (which is in the process of being repaved). Visitors didn't quite know what to make of the spectacle.

"Let me just see how this feels," said Vernon Gaskin, a Clinton Hill resident who sat down on the wooden bench and then called his wife excitedly on the cellphone. "This is on Myrtle Avenue — but it's nice!" he said. "You gotta see it, baby."

"There's really not a lot of places you can lounge in this neighborhood," added Gaskin, when he got off the phone. "Even the bus stops don't have seats anymore."

Transportation Alternatives and the Trust for Public Land supplied the materials for the event, but the organizers of this oasis had a second, particularly local agenda. A group of Pratt Institute undergrads and the Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project wanted to draw attention to their efforts to beautify the street, and to solicit ideas for how to make it more user-friendly.

"We're specifically looking at street-

spaces — how do people on foot, on bikes, pushing strollers, how do they use the space," said Samantha Kazook Murphy, a professor at Pratt Institute. "How can we make it more useful, attractive to visitors, and still retain its historical character?"

Israel Ortiz, who has lived in the neighborhood for 40 years, said the park-in-lot was a good start. "This is better than all the dust," said Ortiz, smiling as he regarded the green from the pockmarked sidewalk. "That's real grass! That's good. We have enough of this pollution."

Gaskin agreed and said Myrtle Avenue could use more such street furniture — as long as it was strategically situated, of course. "It's a good concept, but it depends on who wants to lounge there," said Gaskin. "If people are going to abuse it, that's something else. As long as it's not near a methadone clinic, or something like that, then it's a good idea."

Dental damn!

Bank bldg. office space price cut

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

The price of a gigantic office suite at One Hanson Place — the former Williamsburgh Savings Bank office tower that's being converted into luxury condos — has been slashed by nearly 10 percent from the previous asking price of \$17 million.

Now, for a mere \$15.4 million, a buyer can purchase portions of floors one through six and the entire seventh floor of the tallest building in Brooklyn, — which was once epicenter of the borough's dental trade.

All cash offers for the space were originally due by May 30. But Ronald Solarz, the executive director of Eastern Con-

dated, which is brokering the space for the developer, the Dermot Company, said, "The property is still for sale." He said buyer could range from "an investor type who wants to be a landlord for a user, possibly a dentist who wants to put his office there and at the same time wants to have an investment."

"The [lower price] is a way for the ownership to indicate its seriousness about making a deal in the near future," Solarz added. "It's a very focused and committed seller."

But Roslyn Huebner, of Aguayo and Huebner Realty, said the price-slashing indicated that investors weren't confident they could profit from buying the space and then renting it out. The huge 32,000-square-foot



The Williamsburgh Savings Bank tower, former home to dentists, is being converted.

um would have an entrance on Ashland Place, around the corner from One Hanson Place's grand entrance.

Huebner said maintaining some of the building's storied medical history — it was once home to 150 dentists and physicians — was important. "I would hope that some of the old doctors and dentists would be coming back," said Huebner. "I used to go to a doctor there."

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agency charged with facilitating development in the neighborhood) to elected officials like Assemblyman Hakwon Jeffries (D-Fort Greene) and Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) to Clinton Hill artist Danny Simmons. So far, they've gotten a lot of moral support, but nothing tangible.

"I think their concept fits well with the idea of the BAM Cultural District," said Simmons. "Hopefully somebody will come to their rescue." Simmons will not be that somebody.

"I'm an artist. If I had deep pockets, I would buy into it," said Simmons. "I would recommend it to people who are venture capitalists."

James, meanwhile, said the partners' fate rests with the landlord.

"The landlord will have to reimburse them for all of their expenses to make Amber whole," said James.

But Lopez said the money is going to have to come from the city. "They won't get a penny from me. I didn't decide to condemn the business. The city did."

The partners said there is no way they can hold on for more than a few months. Their only hope lies in finding a new space fast.

"We're facing complete financial destitution," said Triplett. "We're in a place where we need immediate assistance, and we're trying to identify where that's going to come from."

Dana Rubinstein is a staff writer for The Brooklyn Paper.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Get a taste of the flourishing, but under-the-radar, Wallabout arts scene and help out the S.E.L. Lupus Foundation of New York, by checking out a show called "Immendo," from Oct. 13 to Nov. 24 at the new **Art Space MCNY/NTC** (20 Grand Ave., between Flushing and Park avenues). Visit www.wnspc.com/mcnyvc or call (917) 478-7513 for information. ... We hear our pal **DK Holland** will run an article in the next issue of The Hill, a literary magazine, outlining for once and for all the boundaries of Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, and Wallabout (take that, you boundary-shifting real-estate brokers!). ... Bummer that you missed the opening of artist **George Spencer's** show at the Pink Elephant Projects gallery, where all of his pieces sold out in just two hours? Don't be. PEP is taking pity on latecomers by holding a BBQ on Saturday, Sept. 29, with 18 new pieces at \$50 a pop. The gallery is at 64 Washington Ave. (bet. Park and Flushing avenues). For information, call (347) 266-5872.

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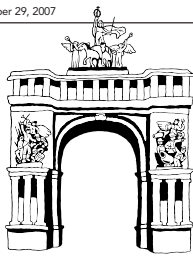
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THE STOOP

PARK SLOPE PROSPECT HEIGHTS, SUNSET PARK WINDSOR TERRACE, KENSINGTON

Food Co-op back to future

The Park Slope Food Co-op will close on Oct. 1 and reopen on Oct. 2. If that sounds like no big deal, consider this: The Co-op will travel 30 years in that single day.

Yes, debit cards are finally coming to the Park Slope Food Co-op. Now mock if you must, but among the Co-op's 13,000 members, this is about as big as it gets (though the decision to sell chicken was practically the equivalent of the Berlin Wall falling).

This is the Co-op, though, so the addition of the cashless option — one enjoyed every day by billions of people everywhere except, possibly, North Korea — didn't happen overnight (or without at least several hysterical meetings).

"I was at the General Meeting when the debit cards were actually approved in 2003," said Mike Mermin, a Co-op member for four years. "There was some debate, but it went over well."

Then, every six months or so, I'd hear, "They're coming! They're coming!" I haven't been in the Co-op very long, but long enough to know to just smile and say, "OK, I'll be ready!"

Full disclosure: I made my first debit card purchase at an Alhambra's supermarket in Monterey, California in 1988. It was amazing. The checkout clerk took the card without flinching, rang up the order, and then even asked me if I wanted cash back.

The Co-op's existing system is something different, something vaguely Soviet. After collecting your groceries, you're first rung up by a checkout worker, who then hands you the tabulation, which you take to the cashier line to pay. After paying, you take the first and second receipt to a third station, where it is stamped by a security worker.

Debit card users will be able to skip the cashier line entirely. The system will also eliminate one of the greatest causes of Co-op angst: the person who gets on the checkout line without enough money to cover his purchases.

Count all the leaves on a bulb of organic fennel and you still wouldn't get close to the number of times when I've been working checkout and had to start subtracting bok choy, kohlrabi, Not Dogs and Barbara's Grain Shop cereal from a customer's order because he suddenly realized he didn't have enough cash.

It's easy to blame the grocery store's famously fractious membership for the demise of several debit card systems. But General Manager Joe Holtz said the blame should actually be laid on several computer companies. Mergers, software failures, the death of a key programmer, and, in one case, a company president whose first order of business was cancelling a contract with the "too small" Co-op all conspired to waylay the debit system.

But it's finally coming on Oct. 2, Holtz promised, and it will be great. It has one limitation, of course: it won't take credit cards.

"The members didn't want to be part of anything that encourages people to ring up big debts," Holtz said. "That would make us part of the problem in America, not that there aren't a lot of other problems in America."

At the Food Co-op, though, at least one has finally been solved. Gersh Kuntzman, a Co-op member since 1993, is the editor of *The Brooklyn Paper*.

THE KITCHEN SINK
We were happy to see that the Liz Padilla Memorial Fund raised more than \$20,000 at its second annual fundraising 5K run on Sept. 16 in Prospect Park. Padilla is the cyclist who was run down and killed on Fifth Avenue in 2005. Her death still inspires bike activists. The good news is that even if you didn't run, you can still make a donation by sending checks to the Liz Padilla Memorial Fund, 123 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201 or online at www.active.com/donate/lizpadilla.

Look out for Josh Henkin's long-awaited novel, "Marrimono," his first since he put out "Swimming Across the Hudson" in 1997 (look, he's been busy). Not only is the new book out on Oct. 2, but Henkin will be at the **Seventh Avenue Barnes & Noble** on Oct. 17. "Marrimono" has been called "a devastating novel" (by Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Cunningham), "reminiscent of 'The Mysteries of Pittsburgh'" (by Kirlos), and "Wow, really good" (by our editor's wife — though she may have been merely brown-nosing so she can dog-sit Henkin's Golden Retriever, **Dulcie**). Speaking of books, if Henkin is too highbrow, pick up the **Brooklyn Botanic Garden's** new tome, "Buried Treasures: Tasty Tubers of the World." It's the Garden's first handbook and cookbook devoted to root vegetables and it includes Hawaiian elephant's ear, Japanese devil's tongue, Chinese sacred lotus and South American canna. We're partial to turnips, so we turned down the invite to the book party. ... You gotta hand it to the guys at **Red, White and Bubly** on Fifth Avenue. We went in there the other day, planning to buy a fifth of Dewar's, but the salesmen steered us towards a bottle of Duggan's Dew, another Scotch blend that was half the price and just as delectable. ... The top of the arch in **Grand Army Plaza** will be open next weekend. What a view you get from up there (and fire, unlike the views from the top of that **Richard Meier building** next door). Just head to the arch between 10 am and 4 pm on Oct. 6 or Oct. 7. ... Happy 25th birthday, **Amber**. What you didn't read the chalk wishes that were scrawled on sidewalks all over the Slope last weekend.

E-mail: Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

PS... I LOVE YOU

Gersh Kuntzman



The Park Slope Food Co-op will start taking debit cards next week. Welcome to 1988, members!

Fourth Avenue freeze-out

Pedestrians have nowhere to hide from cars

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The Park Slope Civic Council — fresh from rallying the troops to defeat the city's controversial "One-Way Seventh Avenue" plan earlier this summer — now has its sights set on fixing an "unsafe" situation on much-busier Fourth Avenue.

The cluster-truck in question lies at the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Union Street, the epicenter of an area that's experiencing a meteoric rise in population.

The problem with the intersection is the "very, very narrow" sliver of median at the center of the bustling thoroughfare, said Michael Cairl, a Civic Council member.

"There's no pedestrian refuge zone, except for a very, very narrow section," said Cairl.

The reason for the sliver stems from what Cairl called an unnecessary left-turn lane from northbound Fourth Avenue. Union Street dead-ends at Third Avenue, one block away, so there's no point in having westbound cars turn onto it, the Council believes.

The proposed solution? Eliminate the turn lane.

"There is no reason that traffic from northbound Fourth Avenue could not proceed westbound on any number of other streets on either side of Union Street," Civic



The Park Slope Civic Council wants the intersection of Union Street and Fourth Avenue to get a facelift to remove the northbound left-turn lane (arrow) and add more space for pedestrians.

Council President Ken Freeman wrote in a letter to Community Board 6 and to the Department of Transportation. "The current northbound left-turn bay is inadequate for vehicular traffic and its removal would not be a loss."

Craig Chin, a spokesman for the Department of Transportation, would not comment on the proposal. But he did say that the

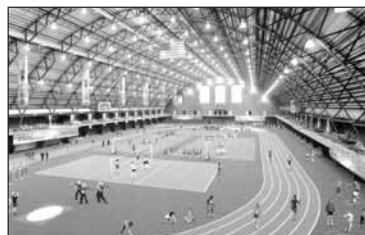
agency was in the process of making other safety improvements to the intersection by extending the curbs into the street in the form of so-called "neck-downs."

"Neckdowns reduce the width of travel lanes ... so pedestrians are more visible and have a shorter crossing distance," said Chin.

Craig Hammerman, the district manager of Community Board 6, said officials and community members should proceed with caution.

"We need to balance the need for safe, pedestrian-friendly streets with the recognition that Fourth Avenue is an important conveyor of volumes of traffic through the region," said Hammerman.

City still misfires at Armory



An artist's rendering of the proposed recreation center in the Park Slope Armory.

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The renovation of the Park Slope Armory has ... military drum roll ... been delayed again.

The city will give would-be operators two more weeks to submit proposals for the enormous and long-underutilized facility.

Now, responses are due on Oct. 11.

It's only the latest in a series of delays that have irritated community members and made local athletes jump. In 2004, when the city announced its \$16-million renovation of the enormous Eighth Avenue building, between 14th and 15th streets, it predicted the center would be open by October 2006.

Now, the city hopes to cut the ribbon in 2008. "I am very curious and eager to see what happens," said Mike Berk, a Prospect Park West resident and cyclist who currently buffs up at the YMCA on Ninth Street, a good 10-block walk from his home.

"I just hope it's cheaper than the Y."

According to the city's requirements, the Armory must continue to house a women's shelter and veteran affairs offices.

But the almost-finished renovation, which includes a new running track, will be available for uses ranging from shot put to table tennis to indoor soccer, according to the city request for proposals.

The operator would have to generate enough revenue to maintain the space, either via membership or other usage fees.

"I'll be minding my own business in the house. Then all of a sudden, I'll hear emergency vehicles, police and sirens and I look out and boom, there was an accident."

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BQE gets its own blog

The Brooklyn Paper

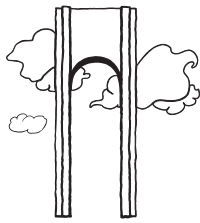
The only thing worse than being stuck on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway is being stuck living next to it — and now its inspired its own blog!

Werner Cohn, who lives on Hicks Street between Amity and Congress streets overlooking six-lanes of BQE chaos, has declared (online) war against the commuting crimes he sees out his living room window.

"The truth is, this highway was built be-

fore they knew how to build highways," said the 61-year-old retired sociologist, who blogs at bqewatch.blogspot.com. The Web site's subtitle is "Fatalities Waiting to Happen." In the last month, Cohn claims to have seen five such crashes within the half-mile of road arounds the very tricky Congress Street entrance.

"I'll be minding my own business in the house. Then all of a sudden, I'll hear emergency vehicles, police and sirens and I look out and boom, there was an accident."



THE stoop

BAY RIDGE-BENSONHURST DYKER HEIGHTS
BATH BEACH

This grass has cyber-roots

The revolution began with a click. For those who believe all those stereotypes about Internet chat rooms making the world a less personal place, an abject lesson can be learned from one group of local cyber-geeks.

That's because Internet-savvy residents of Bay Ridge are now witnessing a new form of community activism, as a group of locals on the popular chat site Bayrid-getalk.com site have punched through the gray world of HTML-coded anonymity and transformed themselves into real world tool of change.

YELLOW HOOKER



Matthew Lysiak

It all began like it usually does in the word of bloggers — with a complaint.

In this case the post involved a suspected crackhouse, allegedly located on 93rd Street between Third and Fourth avenues.

Like most things in the blogosphere, the allegations were long on hyperbole but short on details.

"I live two blocks down from this crackhouse," said poster Concerned Mom. "Bay Ridge is a very nice neighborhood, and I would like to see it stay that way. Does anyone have any suggestions of things we can do?"

This post quickly became a magnet for other residents — who until that time were strangers to each other — with similar concerns about the house.

Those familiar with the Internet know what happened next: complaints, complaints, and more complaints. But instead, this time something truly revolutionary happened.

Quicker than you can type "LOL," the online chat room mobilized into a real world plan to push the community into action.

"Both CB10 and the 68th Precinct hold monthly public meetings," posted one regular BRT PetShopPloy. "We need to organize a group, get on the agenda, show up and get it on the record."

This wasn't just a case of cyber-bluster; the plan was quickly in motion. A handful of the online complainers left their keyboards behind and showed up in the flesh at the last Community Board 10 meeting. They have also been contacting local cops and have gotten on the radar of the 68th Precinct (and the press, though I suppose that's obvious).

In other words, they have effectively made it an issue. This isn't to mean that the group will have success or that the crackhouse (or whatever it is) will be shut down, but it is notable in another important aspect.

Of course, there is nothing new about online activism. Blogs like Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn have been mobilizing residents against hot button issues since Al Gore invented the Internet.

But what is new is that this was a group of strangers who discovered a problem, discussed it in a chat room, and got it on the community agenda.

I'll update you down the road to see if the Community Board or the local cops fix the problem at the alleged crackhouse, but as far as this reporter is concerned, the cyber-surfers have already scored their first success.

Now, has anyone seen that crazy monkey that can bake cherries on YouTube? It is truly amazing.

Matthew Lysiak is a writer who lives in Bay Ridge.

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Sin free!

Three Jewish men participated in the High Holiday "Tashlich" ceremony in which they symbolically cast their sins onto the water in Sheepshead Bay.

Recchia eyes Fossella's seat, but he'd have to move to fill it

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Councilman Domenic Recchia, who once talked about running for borough president, will instead go after five-term Rep. Vito Fossella (R-Bay Ridge).

The Sheepshead Bay Democrat hasn't made a formal announcement, but didn't waste any time coming up with his campaign theme: linking Fossella to deeply unpopular President Bush and his ongoing troubles in Iraq.

"The Republicans gave us this war in Iraq and this is not what New Yorkers deserve," Recchia told The Brooklyn Paper this week. "The Bush-Fossella team got us into this war and we need to get us out."

Fossella's team didn't waste any time in focusing on Recchia's Achilles heel: the fact that he lives far outside the boundaries of the 13th Congressional district, which contains all of Staten Island and a small piece of Bay Ridge and Dyker Heights. He does not have to live in the district to run — but does if he wins.

"It's mind-boggling why Recchia wants to represent our community when he chooses to live in another congressional district," said Fossella political director Georgea Kay. "Think about the absurdity — Recchia doesn't think we're good



Councilman Domenic Recchia will take on Rep. Vito Fossella



Rep. Vito Fossella

tailing a congressional committee early next month.

Before he can take on Fossella, Recchia will first have to dispense with Democrat Steve Harrison, who ran well against Fossella in 2006, getting 43 percent of the vote, despite spending just \$109,000 to Fossella's \$1.3 million.

Recchia said he would not experience Harrison's fundraising woes.

"My track record speaks for itself," boasted the Councilman. "I know Steve and he did a great job last time, but I will go out and raise the money."

For his part, Harrison believes this election will be tilted by Staten Island, which is home to the bulk of the two-borough district.

"No other candidate has the name recognition that I do, especially in Staten Island," said Harrison. "I also learned a lot from the last election and am confident that this time around I will be in a better position to win."

Recchia declined to respond to Kay's charges. But he did say that he would file papers es-

enough to be his neighbor, but he thinks he deserves to be our representative in Congress."

Kay was just warming up.

"Recchia's going to have a tough time convincing Bay Ridge and Bensonhurst residents to support a liberal, tax-raiser who lives outside our district," added Kay.

Recchia declined to respond to Kay's charges. But he did say that he would file papers es-

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2 fests this weekend

The Brooklyn Paper

This is THE weekend for excitement in Bay Ridge, what with the Ragamuffin Parade on Saturday and the Third Avenue Festival on Sunday.

The annual parade of costumed tykes is a must for kids of all ages (especially adults who like to dress up as angels). The kids off on Third Avenue and 70th Street at 11 am and marches all the way to 92nd Street.

On Sunday, check out one of the borough's last "real" street fairs, the Third Avenue Festival. The neighborhood-length block party runs from 69th to 95th streets, beginning at 10 am.



REMEMBER WHEN: Salvatore Biancone played Danny to sister Gabriella's Sandy as they recreated a scene from the movie "Grease" during the Ragamuffin Parade in 2002.

Help me, Honda

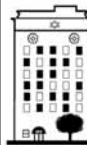
Two cars collided on Sunday in a violent accident near the intersection of Bay Ridge Parkway and New Utrecht Avenue. A witness said that the dark gray Honda (right in picture at far left) was speeding northbound on New Utrecht Avenue when it crossed the center line and smashed into the parked silver Honda, sending both cars careening into one of those newfangled bus shelters (left). The driver was taken to the hospital with minor injuries, the witness said.

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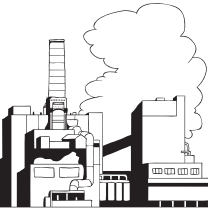
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THE stoop

WILLIAMSBURG-GREENPOINT-BUSHWICK

How to devour Polish food

If you are new to north Brooklyn and its Polish food, you have been missing out. Polish food does not get universal respect — the Larousse Gastronomique praises Poles chiefly for their baking and vodka drinking — but this Rodney Dangerfield of a cuisine will surprise you.

Aside from providing a little history of Poland, from its centuries of involuntary contact with Russians, Germans and Hungarians to more peaceful interaction with Jewish culture, the menus of any of the several dozen Polish restaurants throughout Greenpoint and Williamsburg offer food that is wholesome, tasty and as close to what grandma used to make — if your grandma was anything like my Czech grandma — as any restaurant food in the five boroughs.

Recently, Beside the Point sat down with genuine Poles Malgosia Dunin and Kris Kordowski for lunch and an introductory course in Polish eating at Lomzynianka at 646 Manhattan Ave., a block from the Nassau Avenue stop on the G train. Incidentally, no one at the restaurant could tell us why it is called "Lomzynianka" (Wohin-zhin-YAHN-ka), which means "girl from Lomza," but my guess is that this particular girl was either a whiz in the kitchen or a bit on the heavy side.

Most national cuisines have themes, and the two main themes of Polish cooking are long-term storage and things that you have to bend over and pull out of the ground.

"We are talking about a farming, peasant culture in a climate with a very short growing season," Dunin said. "The prevailing foods tend to be those that can be pickled, dried, smoked, salted or dry-stored."

BESIDE THE POINT

Tom Gilbert



Domino plant landmarked

But fate of iconic waterfront sign remains unclear

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Three conjoined buildings at the dormant Domino Sugar factory on the Williamsburg waterfront have been declared city landmarks, though the status does not affect the plant's beloved sign, which has the misfortune of hanging on a less aesthetically significant, 1960s-era building.

Tuesday's unanimous ruling by the Landmarks Preservation Commission has little practical value, as the three structures — the Filter, Pan and Finishing houses — are slated to be preserved as part of a \$1.5-billion redevelopment of the site by Community Preservation Corporation.

The company's President and CEO Michael Lippin hailed the ruling as "an important first step toward the creation of a new waterfront development that is tied into the existing Williamsburg community."

Lippin plans to transform the 11-acre site, which is bounded by the East River, Wythe Avenue, South Fifth and Grand streets, into a multi-use complex with nine new towers containing 2,400 units of housing. Thirty percent (or 660) of the units would be so-called affordable rentals, 100 units for families earning up to \$21,000.

"We look forward to trans-



The city has landmarked part of the Domino Sugar plant (top), but not the building holding the iconic sign (above).

forming a site that has been walled off for 100 years into a showpiece of affordable housing and park-like waterfront access for all," he added on Tuesday.

Lippin also said that the landmark designation would "add significant cost to our development budget."

The three landmarked buildings date back to 1884, and comprise the factory's original refinery, which produced three million pounds of sugar each day during its peak.

Some preservationists called for the city to preserve an additional 19th-century building on the site, the Adam House, but it was ultimately rejected because it was not as aesthetically important and not in good enough shape to save.

"The refinery is the oldest, intact structure on the site and the most iconic symbol of Brooklyn's industrial heritage on the waterfront," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

Sugar manufacturing was the most important industry in Brooklyn in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But everything from cheaper labor to the diet craze conspired to end sugar's run in Brooklyn.

The refinery closed in 2004 and was bought by Lippin's group, which has long intended to use the three rounded-window, Romanesque Revival structures as an iconic centerpiece to the much-larger project.

A spokesman for Lippin said the developer is looking at several ways to preserve the famous sign, but hasn't figured out how to do it yet.

"It's not affixed to one of the designated buildings, but he is trying," said the spokesman, Richard Edmonds.

ON OUR OTHER stoop PAGES

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Diet at Co-opt
COBBLE HILL
A BOE blog?
B'HEIGHTS
Cloney spotting
BAY RIDGE
Corn vs. Vio

online at BrooklynPaper.com

bread. The highlights are krupnik (mushroom barley soup), zurek (a white borscht, pronounced zho-rek), red borscht with uszka (delicious dumplings sometimes flavored with mushroom) and flaczki (tripe in broth, pronounced flatz-kee).

In the summer, there are yummy, refreshing cold soups such as owcowa (fruit soup, pronounced oh-voe-toh-vah) and chłodnik (jowd-nik made of buttermilk, beetroot leaves, cucumber and dill).

Then comes the main course, which might include: Golabski (gah-wah-kee). Literally "pigeons" — these are rice- and meat- (no, not pigeon) — stuffed cabbage leaves, stewed in a light tomato sauce. Eat a pair of these and be prepared to skip your next meal.

Kielbasa (kee-oh-bah-sa). Many Americans know this as a garlicky sausage that can be found next to the hot dogs at the A&P, but the real thing comes in two forms: meaty and spicy. There are many types, and fresh, which is grilled or boiled and served with mustard or a pickled beet horseradish called cwička (ch-vee-kwah).

Pierogi (peer-oh-ghee). Ravioli's heavier Slavic cousin, these may contain cheese and potato (ruskie, or "Russian"); meat; sauerkraut and mushrooms; or nothing (leniwe [leh-nee-veh] or "lazy").

Bigos (bee-gose). Sometimes translated as "hunter's stew," this one-pot winter dish contains nearly everything in the Polish larder — sauerkraut, dried mushrooms, kielbasa, bacon, beef, onions, red wine and dried prunes. One of the glories of Polish cooking, bigos is like the ragu of Bologna in its variety.

"It is a point of pride in every Polish household that their bigos is made slightly differently from anyone else's," Dunin said. A given recipe may omit several of the above ingredients or may contain others.

Placki ziemniaczane (plotz-kee zhen-ni-ach-eh). These potato pancakes must be cooked to order, as they were at Lomzynianka. They are delicious. We also tried a variation called Hungarian pie or placki węgierski (plah-trz-veh-yah-ye-skee), made of potato pancakes on top of beef goulash. It is as filling as it sounds, but worth it.

Out of a commitment to journalism. I ordered blintzes for dessert. These are crepes filled with cheese, blueberries, cherries or strawberries and topped with sour cream. Many Polish restaurants also serve compote, or fruit stewed in a light syrup.

There are two other things you need to know. One is that Lomzynianka and similar places are unconscionably cheap — our far-too-large meal for three came to under \$30 — and the other is the Polish phrase for take-out: na wynos (nah-vee-nos). You'll need it.

Tom Gilbert, a writer and historian, lives in Greenpoint.

THE KITCHEN SINK

The Espasa Streb Trapeze Academy of Williamsburg is offering trapeze classes seven days a week for kids, adults, advanced and a new workout class. They also have a Halloween show coming up in October. "Ghouls just wanna have fun" and "Pumpkins and parties." It's a burlesque circus. Both benefit the Streb's Kids in Control outreach program. Check out www.espastrebatrapeze.org for more info. ... On Sept. 19, students, volunteers and project leaders unveiled a community mural at the corner of Woodbine and Knickerbocker avenues, representing the 30-year anniversary of the city's infamous 1977 blackout, which left Bushwick in ruins. But the comeback has happened, thanks to institutions like the Academy of Urban Planning, a public high school. ... The next Town Square meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 1 at 102 Oak Street (Franklin Street) at 7 pm. Call (718) 609-1090 for info. ... Need some real estate in Williamsburg? You're probably going to be calling Andrew Stiller, who is the neighborhood's new broker for the Massey Knakal realty giant. He's only 22, but the commission from his first sale is more than we make in two years! ... Ran into our pal Robert Guskind, the maestro behind the always-excellent Gownless Lounge blog, as he shot a picture of an abandoned bike at the corner of Bedford and North 11th Street. He got his scoop and we got this item.

E-mail: Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com



A guy paid \$5 million for this residentially zoned Meserole Street site — and is going to put in an auto-body shop!

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YARDS COVERAGE • AWARD-WINNING ATLANTIC YARDS COVERAGE • AWARD WIN

Two more Ratner opponents cave

Lawsuit against Atlantic Yards is losing its plaintiffs one by one

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Two of the final holdouts in the Atlantic Yards footprint have quietly settled with developer Bruce Ratner, a move that signifies that the opposition to Brooklyn's largest real estate project may be entering its endgame.

The two tenants who settled had used the developer — along with 11 other property owners and tenants whose homes and businesses the state intends to condemn to make way for Ratner's Frank Gehry-designed towers.

Their withdrawal from the one-year-old lawsuit should not be construed as support for the Atlantic Yards mega-development, but merely an acceptance of reality, according to their lawyer, Jennifer Levy.

"The tenants don't agree with the project, but their rights are limited under the law, so if they are being offered something that protects their rights, they will take it," she said.

The tenants' exit from the case — which was dismissed by a judge in June, but will be heard in a federal appeals court on Oct. 9 — indicates that some have lost hope that the \$4-billion, state-approved project can be stopped.

Four other renters represented by Levy are currently in settlement talks with the developer, she said.

The tenants declined to speak publicly because of confidentiality clauses in the agreements.

The move represents a change of strategy for Forest City Ratner, which earlier had been unwilling to negotiate with tenants in the lawsuit, said Levy.

"There is certainly a sense now that [the developer] would like to move forward with a settlement," she said, ascribing the change to a desire to "stick with [the project's] timeline."

The need to settle and relocate the small number of holdouts who remain in the project's 22-acre footprint is partly motivated by simple economic fact. Each month of delay costs Forest City Ratner \$4.15 million in construction and carrying costs, according to a legal affidavit submitted by the company last year.

State law requires the developer to relocate anyone who loses a home to eminent domain. The laws that surround renters, however, are murkier.

Rent-stabilized tenants often lose their most-cherished protection against a booming real-estate market: a state-regulated, below-market-rate lease.

Even a generous settlement will not help tenants find another protected unit, or permanently guard them from the city's gentrifying real-estate market, though Ratner has promised to provide the displaced tenants stabilized apartments in Atlantic Yards when he completes the first phase of the project in, he says, 2010.

"Some of these people don't have other options," said Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn spokesman Daniel Goldstein, who stands to lose a luxury condo to the project and is the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit.

One rent-stabilized tenant who remains a plaintiff in the lawsuit said he recently reopened informal negotiations with Ratner. Ratner had stopped discussing a buyout last year after the tenant rejected an offer that he felt was stingy, the tenant said. The new offer on the table calls for more money, he said.

He said that he felt the developer was trying to knock him out of the eminent domain suit before that Oct. 9 appeal hearing. "They want to be able to say that the plaintiffs are dropping like flies," he said.

Forest City Ratner declined to comment on the litigation or settlements.



Cleaning up

Prospect Heights residents finally did what the city and Bruce Ratner were unable or unwilling to do: clean up Pacific Street. After complaining about neglect along the Ratner-controlled railyards, volunteers filled 30 contractor bags with debris at the Sept. 23 event, dubbed "People Still Live Here" day. City law holds property owners responsible for litter in front of their buildings, but the Department of Sanitation and the Empire State Development Corporation declined to comment on the mess. No wonder activists want ESDC to finally appoint the long-promised construction ombudsman.

UNITY Plan: Why now?

Why did a group of activists hatch a new development plan for the Prospect Heights rail yards that Bruce Ratner has already been promised for Atlantic Yards? The Explainer breaks it down.

What happened?

The so-called UNITY Plan was unveiled this week. The new plan — which includes more affordable housing than Ratner's project, no arena and doesn't require eminent domain — prompted little reaction from the state agency managing the \$4-billion mega-development.

But isn't the Atlantic Yards deal done?

Yes, if you ask city and state officials. But even they admit that the real-estate market is a volatile beast.

But isn't the real estate market hot hot hot?

Not exactly. Financial markets are tightening, making it harder for Ratner to line up investors. At the same time, tighter money means higher mortgage rates for his potential luxury buyers. Plus, there is a glut of luxury units coming on line, a factor that has already started to squeeze profit margins for high-end builders, any delays in construction cost Ratner \$4.15 million a month in carrying costs.

Is there any other way the plan can be stopped?

Two lawsuits are percolating through the legal system: One is an eminent domain lawsuit charging that state planners abused the state's condemnation power to line Ratner's pockets. It was dismissed earlier this summer, but the federal appeal will be heard on Oct. 9. The other pending lawsuit challenges the project's environmental review. It's awaiting judgment in state court.

Where does the UNITY plan go from here?

Nowhere — at least if you believe the Empire State Development Corporation, which remains "committed to the vision ... approved for Atlantic Yards," said agency spokesman Erol Cockfield.

The Explainer

No love for UNITY from city, state

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

City and state officials say they don't intend to consider a community-based alternative development plan for the Prospect Heights site of Bruce Ratner's controversial Atlantic Yards project that was unveiled this week.

The so-called UNITY proposal includes mostly affordable apartments, no arena and doesn't require condemning land via eminent domain. But to be anything more than a few planners' dream of ideal, community-driven development, support from city and state officials is necessary.

That support is not there.

"We remain committed to the vision set out in the General Project Plan approved for Atlantic Yards," said Erol Cockfield, a spokesman for the Empire State Development Corporation, the lead

agency on Atlantic Yards, which contains 16 towers, 6,430 units of housing, a 19,000-seat basketball arena, a hotel, and hundreds of thousands of square feet of office, retail and commercial space.

Cockfield declined to comment directly on the UNITY proposal, saying only that the agency is "open to hearing community concerns about the project."

The city was similarly discouraging about the future of the grassroots plan. When asked whether the city would look at a plan other than Ratner's, City Planning spokeswoman Rachael Raynor said only, "The city expects the Atlantic Yards plan to move forward."

UNITY advocates say that the city and state's ambivalence is to be expected — for now. They say that attitudes will only shift when the developer's circumstances do, which they think could happen as a result of pending lawsuits or as a downturn in the real-estate market (see

The Explainer, left).

"Politicians are practical people so as the ground shifts under this particular project they will take a second look at this proposal," said planner Marshall Brown, a former Fort Greene resident and architecture professor at the University of Cincinnati.

Brown said he and his fellow planners — former Planning Commissioner Ron Shiffman and Hunter College professor Tom Angotti — fear that Ratner will only build the first phase of his project (the arena and several skyscrapers at the corner of Atlantic and Flatbush avenues) and then lose interest, run out of money, or give in to the declining market.

Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Prospect Heights) said that she plans to push state officials to meet with her to discuss the proposal, which sprang out of a community planning process that began three years with the support of her office.



A model of the UNITY plan.

KICKBALL COVERAGE • BROOKLYN'S BEST KICKBALL COVERAGE • BROOKLYN'S BEST

Kickball is the new city game

— in Williamsburg, of course



Serious action at the Brooklyn Kickball semi-finals on Sunday.

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Perhaps it's appropriate that the Non-Committals won.

After all, this was the quarter-finals of Brooklyn Kickball, played every Sunday by the ultra-hipsters in cool McCarren Park, so who better to jadedly take victory out of the slack-jawed defeat than a bunch of people who couldn't have been bothered to have their own team during the regular season?

"I have to dispute that assertion," said Kevin "D Like Delicieux" Dailey, who oversees the 30-team league. "All of the Non-Committals played for some teams during the regular season. These aren't ringers we imported from Puerto Rico or the Major Leagues."

"Spertz [Josie Alexander] played on 12 different teams this year," Dailey added.

In some leagues, you can't tell the players without a scorecard: in Brooklyn Kickball, you need a yearbook.

Or a fashion magazine. On a Brooklyn Kickball field, uniform attire runs the full gamut from hipster cool to retro chic (yes, we're talking about the second baseman in the tight white t-shirt and the short short Catholic school skirt, and the first baseman with the knee-high American flag socks).

There seems to be a role for every player has to be gorgeous.

"It's not a league rule," Alexander said. "It's the neighborhood."

Despite the appearance of a league-wide slacker mentality, the Non-Committals-Mellencamps matchup was hotly anticipated.

The Non-Committals used to be the Burninators, who won



Zach Kirsella of the John Cougar Mellencamps lost his semi-final game this week, and will now have to watch the hated Non-Committals play for the championship this Sunday at McCarren Park. The pregame scoreboard (inset) could not predict the drama to come.

it all in 2005 then lost to the Mellencamps in 2006; explained Dailey. "So this is going to be emotional."

And, indeed, it was.

The Mellencamps scored three quick runs in the first with an aggressive style of baserunning (a guy scored from second on a ground ball to first).

But the Non-Committals fought back, sending the game into extra innings, where they

won it on a play that captured the intangible attraction of this most wheeling of sports: With no other play a runner on first in the bottom of the 12th, a Non-Committal kicker popped up to shallow left field. The runner tagged up and safely slid into second base, but the ball got away from the defense, and he scampered to third.

With no time to think, Mellencamp third-baseman Priest

Fontaine made what turned out to be a crucial mistake, trying to hit the runner with the bright yellow ball (a strategy once called "Indian Rubber" before the PC police ruined kickball).

Of course, Fontaine missed, sending the ball into foul territory and the runner scampering home with the winning run.

Afterwards, Fontaine invented a reason for his stunning error.

"There was only one out, so

if I don't get him, he probably would've scored on the next play," Fontaine said.

"It's a tough loss, but I have to keep remembering the team motto: 'The team motto?'

"Party time."

The Brooklyn Kickball finals will be played on Sunday, Sept. 30 on Field 3 at McCarren Park (Bedford Avenue between North 12 and Lorimer Street).

What's in a name?

We all know kickball is a serious sport, and the members of Brooklyn Kickball know it, too. And nothing epitomizes that seriousness like the names of teams in the league. Here's a sample:

- The John Cougar Mellencamps
- New Frontiersmen
- The Government Kickbacks
- Makeouts
- Brooklyn United
- Divine Sisterhood
- Never Scared
- People's Court
- Lightning Turtles
- High 5z
- Crucial Taunt
- Hold-Em-Ups
- Karl Malones
- Kangaroos
- Kickball Fever
- Bacon Bits
- Prison
- Wyld Stallions
- Never Kick a Baby
- Killa Killa
- Fearsome Babies
- Otters

HEATH...

Continued from page 1

in front of the Ledger-Williams mansion for publicity.

"We've got clients all over the city," Tony said. "C'mon!"

The neighbor said that hiring Celebrity Movers may have been Ledger's idea of a joke.

"He's Australian, so he's got a weird sense of humor," the neighbor said.

Lately, Ledger has been spotted only in the gossip columns, canoodling with Danish models in Manhattan. Meanwhile, Williams, who lived in the neighborhood even before she and Ledger hooked up on the set of "Brokeback Mountain," is keeping a low profile.

When a Brooklyn Paper reporter rang the bell at the \$3.5-million mansion, a friend of the former "Dawson's Creek" star opened the door and promised to pass along our request for an interview.

"I'll make sure she gets in," the friend said. "She's out right now." (Also, Williams did not respond to the request.)

Nor did the official mouthpieces for the stars, L.A.-based publicist Mara Butzbau, who used to speak for both members of the uber-couple, but no longer serves as Ledger's mouthpiece, did not respond to a request for an interview either.

And Ledger's manager, Steven Alexander, did not return a message from The Brooklyn Paper.



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78th BLOTTER

Two bad weeks for deliverers

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

Two thugs beat and robbed a pizza deliveryman at knifepoint on 13th Street early on Sept. 16.

The robbers ordered a pizza at around 1:30 am and gave a phony callback number. When the deliveryman arrived at the dropoff point — between Eighth Avenue and Prospect Park West — the men hit him in the head and face and took \$60 from his pocket and the pizza from his arms. They fled toward Prospect Park, cops said.

The crime is horrifyingly similar to the mugging of a deliveryman from a Fifth Avenue diner last week.

Phone fraud

File this under "Reasons to Protect your Identity": A 34-year-old man walked into the 78th Precinct stationhouse on Sept. 18 to report that someone had racked up almost \$1,500 in cellphone bills on an account in his name.

The victim, who lives on President Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues, told police he learned about the identity theft when debt collectors started calling him.

Cards from car

In case you needed another reason to remember to lock your car doors, consider this: A thief on Butler Street, just east of Fourth Avenue, got an easy score of credit cards out of a black BMW whose owner hadn't locked the doors on Sept. 22.

The victim was at home when the thief made off with his driver's license, American Express and Discover credit cards and an ATM card from Sovereign Bank.

Bye, Hummer

An events planner from North Carolina, who recently opened an office in Park Slope, didn't get a visit from the local welcome wagon when he came to town, but a thief did swipe his Hummer from Prospect Place on Sept. 16.

The 29-year-old victim told police he left his black H2 parked between Sixth and Flatbush avenues at 3 am, and it was gone by 9:30 am.

Street mug

Robbers stole hundreds of dollars from a 53-year-old man on his way home from his job at a grocery store on Seventh Avenue.

The victim told police he was walking to the subway at Fourth Avenue and Union Street when two men punched him and took \$700 from his front shirt pocket before running toward Sixth Avenue.

Home theft

A burglar busted in a rear bedroom window on Garfield Place and got away with a laptop, a fancy bike and \$150 in loose change on Sept. 18.



Fire this time

Two weeks, two fires: Sixth Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues has been the site of two car fires in consecutive weeks. This green Subaru was torched last Wednesday, and then on Monday night, another fire was started. In both cases, it appears that the pyromaniacs ignited a pile of trash that had been stuffed under the vehicles. "That's two garbage nights in a row," a local resident told Brownstone, a Brooklyn real-estate blog. "Clearly, it's becoming a problem." — Dana Rubinstein

Bus to Ikea

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Take your flat pack on the bus. New York City Transit has agreed to reroute the B61 and the B77 bus lines next year so they stop at a corner of Red Hook that is fast turning blue — Ikea blue.

The B61 — which travels through Cobble Hill and western Carroll Gardens before terminating at the intersection of Van Brunt and Beard Street, two blocks west of the site — will stop in front of the store's entrance at the intersection of Beard and Columbia streets.

The same spot will also be a stop for the B77, which travels west on Ninth Street from Park Slope to Red Hook and currently terminates one block north of the site at Lorraine and Dykeman streets.

The new bus stops could reduce what is generally expected to be an influx of car traffic to the store, which will open next spring, according to Charles Seaton, a spokesman for MTA NYC Transit.

"This will allow a large number of people to reach [Ikea] without using a car," said Seaton.

The extension of Red Hook's two bus lines has been on the drawing board since 2003, when the city gave Ikea permission to build the superstore over the cries of residents who fear the traffic congestion it will bring.

Ikea will also introduce its own private shuttle bus to famously transit-starved Red Hook. The private shuttle will stop at subway stations in Brooklyn, connecting riders on the 2, 3, 4, 5, A, C, F, M, N, and R subway lines to the store, which will be the country's largest.

Even with these new transit choices, the superstore is expected on a busy day to attract 11,000 cars, 100 trucks and several commuter ferries.

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Sin free!

Three Jewish men participated in the High Holiday "Tashlich" ceremony in which they symbolically cast their sins into the water in Sheepshead Bay.

They asked for the time, but stole kid's iPod in Cobble Hill

By Ariella Cohen and Harry Cheshire
The Brooklyn Paper

76th Precinct

They said they just wanted the time, but they ended up taking an iPod.

Four men roughed up two teens and took one of their iPods in broad daylight on Sept. 20.

They began by asking the two victims, who were walking down Warren Street near South Street. They said it was 2:15 p.m., but then the men surrounded them and began pushing them.

"Can I hear one song?" one of the thugs asked, pointing to a video iPod, before simply grabbing it. One teen got free from his assailants and ran off, and the muggers scattered soon after.

Motorboy

Police have arrested a 16-year hoodlum for stealing his neighbor's motorcycle.

The boy criminal was caught on Kane Street between Court and Clinton streets on Sept. 11, police said.

Police said that the kid thief would likely be let off the hook with an order to do community service and stay away from his neighbor's toys.

Car gone

A 54-year-old woman lost her car right in front of her Sackett Street home on Sept. 9, police said.

The woman parked her car on the corner of Hoyt Street before going to bed. When she woke up, the 2004 black Hyundai Alutira was gone, without even a shunt of broken glass left in its wake. Police remain on the lookout for the \$10,000 car.

Bar attack

A bartender was robbed at gunpoint on Sept. 16 as she prepared to open the Van Brunt Street tavern, police said.

The 24-year-old barmaid was cleaning a bathroom in the bar, which is on the corner of Pioneer Street, when two thugs entered through an unlocked door and

POLICE BLOTTER

88th Precinct

flashed a gun at her. One of the men put the revolver in her mouth and demanded \$45 cash from the register. The robbers took the bartender's cellphone, \$150 in tip money and \$5,000 from the kid before tying up the woman with duct tape and fleeing.

The bartender freed herself from her bathroom jail minutes after the hoodlums fled.

Discredited

Two hoodlums held up a credit union located inside a church and were thrown out by a heroic man after getting the money.

The old combination church/bank (moneychangers in the temple, anyone?), which is located on Grand Avenue near Greene Avenue, was victimized on Sept. 19 around 8:30 p.m. The two gunmen entered, one shouting, "Give me all your money!" to an employee.

The woman complied, putting some cash into a bag, but as she was doing so, a man sneaked up behind the two and wrestled with them, somehow managing to get both of them out the door without being shot.

Snatched

A thief added insult to injury on Sept. 17, when a woman's purse was stolen from her car moments after she crashed into another vehicle.

The rear-end happened on Shadington Avenue between Myrtle and Park avenues at 6:30 p.m. The 36-year-old woman got out of her 1998 Ford Explorer to see the damage to the other car, but in those short minutes, an unknown perp grabbed her purse from the front seat of her car.

The purse contained \$225, keys, and credit cards.

Teenybopped

A 13-year-old boy had not one, but both of his cellphones stolen in broad daylight while he

membering her manners, asked

"Could you please give back the jacket?"

"I ain't giving you s---," he replied. "Move."

He shoved her out of the way and continued walking. The woman proceeded to call the cops and follow the man for a couple blocks, until he was picked up and arrested.

A teenager was roughed up and had his phone stolen on Sept. 17, but the perp was quickly arrested, cops said.

Pass the phone

The 15-year-old victim was walking on Fulton Street near Grand Avenue at around 5 p.m. when a man came up to him and said, "Pass it," referring to the boy's Sidekick cellphone.

The boy said, "No," but that wasn't a good enough answer for the perp, who punched him in the face and grabbed the phone. Cops found the perp at the corner of Bedford Avenue and Pacific Street.

84th Precinct

iStuff lost in late-night grabs

A violent attempt to grab a woman's iPhone ended when the cops fortunately passed by and arrested the attacker at midnight, Sept. 21.

Perhaps inspired by jealousy for the \$600 superphone, the mugger grabbed the woman from behind at the corner of Bridge and Front streets. He attempted to choke her, and also grabbed her face, injuring her lip.

She understandably wouldn't let go of the must-have mobile device, and just then the cops happened to come by on patrol.

The officers restrained the 22-year-old man and put him into custody. In other incidents:

On Sept. 17 at 3 a.m., a man on his way to the store was ambushed by three nasty customers who beat him up and stole his iPod, BlackBerry, and American and Russian currency.

The 23-year-old victim was walking near the corner of Jay and Plymouth streets when two men and a woman ran behind

him, kicked him to the ground, and cleaned out his pockets.

On Sept. 22, a man walking along York Street at Pearl Street at 2:30 a.m. was grabbed from behind, pushed around, and relieved of his iPod mini, Motorola cellphone, digital camera, \$12 and credit cards.

Bad bus ride

An unusually polite mugger robbed a young woman while they were riding the bus early in the morning Sept. 18.

There were only two passengers on the bus as it neared the corner of Joralemon and Court streets at 2:30 a.m. One of them, a 5-foot-8 man, asked the other one, an 18-year-old woman, what her name was. After that formality was out of the way, he pulled out a switchblade and demanded her wallet. She complied, and he jumped off the bus, making off with \$40 and a bus pass.

Subway stick-up

A woman entering a subway station on the evening of Sept. 21 was accosted by a man wearing an unusually nice jacket and had to give up her cash.

The victim was walking towards the B-train stop on DuKob and Flatbush avenues when the mugger, who was described as wearing "messy, dirty, torn clothes," approached her and said, "I have a knife. Give me your wallet! Hurry up!"

The woman took out \$300 and handed it over and the man ran off along DuKob.

Red handed

A man and a boy tried to break into a trailer near a police station on Sept. 22 and got caught with their hands at their feet.

A witness noticed the two crooks climbing over a fence surrounding a construction trailer on Gold Street near Tech Place less than a block away from the 84th Precinct stationhouse around 9:30 a.m.

The witness alerted a nearby officer, who went into the fenced-off area and found the team — a 28-year-old and his 14-year-old accomplice — in the middle of trying to break the trailer door open. They had a hacksaw, wire cutters, and a screwdriver on the ground next to them, and the door had brand-new scratches on it.

'Abolitionist' Duffield Street

But RR houses still face doom

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

The Bloomberg Administration co-named a stretch of Duffield Street in Downtown Brooklyn "Abolitionist Place" last Thursday — even as the city is planning to tear down historic houses on that block that may have served as stations on the Underground Railroad.

The street co-naming is a nice gesture, said Councilwoman Letitia James (D-East Green), who co-sponsored the bill to rename the street, but it won't mean much if the mayor moves forward with his plan.

"I don't think the administration sufficiently appreciates the history of these homes and the role of the abolitionist movement in downtown Brooklyn," James told The Brooklyn Paper on Wednesday.

The Bloomberg administration has agreed to spend \$2 million to memorialize the abolitionist activity on Duffield Street nearby, but the buildings will still be torn down to make room for a park and an underground parking lot.

This year, the city hired a consultant to investigate whether seven buildings on the buildings and the abolitionist movement — and, as The Brooklyn Paper reported in May, was rejected by two-thirds of the peer reviewers hired to assess the report.

One reviewer called the report "seriously flawed," and another said, "Duffield Street has all the markers of an Underground Railroad site."

James and Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) pushed the administration to honor the shadowy network of abolitionists who used homes on the block to hide runaway slaves.

Duffield Street represents sacred ground," James said. "Co-naming Duffield Street 'Abolitionist Place' was an attempt to put pressure on the administration to recognize that they need to



Duffield Street was ceremonially co-named "Abolitionist Place" last Thursday, despite a city plan to condemn historic homes that are possibly linked to the fabled Underground Railroad.

incorporate these homes into their development plan, which they can easily do."

Joy Chatel, owner of 227 Duffield St., said she wanted to preserve the legacy of her home

for her 11 grandchildren.

227 Duffield Street, or rather 227 Abolitionist Place, is the only landmark we have left of America's first civil rights movement," Chatel said.

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Life in the tornado zone

Residents try, but fail, to get back to normal



Mary McCormack pointing to the damaged drainpipe at her 72nd Street home.

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Seven weeks after the once-in-a-lifetime tornado touched down in Bay Ridge, life for the handful of households in the tornado's angry path has not returned to normal.

Ida Thomas didn't need to wait for President Bush to declare her Narrows Avenue block a disaster area — all she had to do was look at her property.

"I've had to borrow money from friends and family to fix what I could," said Thomas, whose damages have exceeded \$10,000. "Life has been quite difficult and I have had to live with the workers."

The storm damaged her garage, floors, and even the structural integrity of her home's foundation. Most important, she only had enough money to partially fix the roof

— so life has meant praying for dry weather.

"Every time it rains, my roof takes more damage," said Thomas. "God forbid, I don't get it fixed before it snows, I'm not sure the roof will hold."

Thomas has been working with Federal Emergency Management Agency, which has only offered loans and not the grants for which she hoped she would be eligible.

"I could really use those grants," added Thomas. FEMA told Thomas that she must apply for the loans first before she can look into the grants.

After the twister touched down on 72nd Street and Narrows Avenue, it bounced up and then landed again around 60th Street between Fourth and Seventh avenues.

On these blocks, buildings are still covered with big tarp, and bright yellow signs

posted by the Department of Buildings are taped to many doors warning of the structural damage within.

That's also where Ho Wong lives, amongst constant construction, dust, and tools at his 69th Street home. Seven weeks after the winds blew through his world, Wong still lives with constant construction on his roof and debris in his yard.

Wong said his landlord is handling the work, and the noise keeps him up at night.

"It should be like this for a few more weeks," said Wong. "Some nights it is pretty hard to sleep."

The doorways on the tornadoes path are also crammed with business cards from opportunistic construction companies looking to cash in on the new demand for labor.

Helen McCormack, who lives at 102 72nd St., lost a tree



Mary McCormack decorated a souvenir handed out by Parks Department workers after the Aug. 8 tornado in Bay Ridge.

in her backyard. An arborist estimated that it would cost more than \$1,000 to remove the damage and make her yard usable again. "Now when my grandkids come over they have to stay inside," said McCormack. "It is a

real problem." She didn't think the case was something that would make her eligible for aid — which is one of the problems, at least according to FEMA spokeswoman Barbara Lynch.

"If the tree poses a danger, she should definitely apply," said Lynch.

"One of the surprising problems we are having now is that so many people who have damage aren't applying."

Residents vie for piece of tornado cash pie



Life is still far from normal along Bay Ridge Parkway, the epicenter of the Aug. 8 tornado, where homeowners are still making repairs.

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Tornado-ravaged residents of Brooklyn have been knocking on Uncle Sam's door looking for some cash — and it looks like he has finally answered.

This week, \$300,000 will begin trickling into the area — an amount that will grow as more people apply, according to the Federal Emergency Management Administration spokeswoman Barbara Lynch.

"The money is coming real soon," said Lynch. "The issue now is to get people who suffered damage to apply, and we will take care of the rest."

Getting residents to come and get the cash didn't appear to be too much of a problem.

That's because as of Wednesday, 539 Brooklyn residents had already filed an application with FEMA and 192 residents had visited the agency's 59th Street field office. The grant amount that has already been approved is at \$291,938.

Grants provided by the federal government do not need to be paid back.

The Small Business Administration has also approved 17 applications for

home loans of \$537,700.

Lynch said that more loans would be issued if more people would send their paperwork back. Out of 1,555 applications that went out, fewer than 20 were returned.

Residents should apply, she said, because now that Uncle Sam's wallet has been pried open, getting the cash is easy. After President Bush initially only awarded relief funds to Queens, where more than 1,000 homes were flooded, Rep. Vito Fossella (R-Bay Ridge)

should arrive.

"The complicated part is over," added Lynch.

But it wasn't always this simple.

After the Aug. 8 storm, FEMA sent inspectors to the hardest-hit areas — a concentric circle around 67th Street between Fourth and Seventh avenues. Though hundreds of cars and roofs were destroyed, President Bush initially only awarded relief funds to Queens, where more than 1,000 homes were flooded.

Rep. Vito Fossella (R-Bay Ridge)

Update! FEMA office to remain open

The Brooklyn Paper

The Federal Emergency Management Agency field office in Bay Ridge will remain open for another month.

Originally, the emergency agency told tornado victims that the office would close on Sept. 28, but that was inaccurate, said spokeswoman Sandra Martin.

"We thought they were closing the office early, but the office will remain open until Oct. 30 — the deadline" for filing claims.

Martin added that the office would be downsized, due to the slow foot traffic, but encouraged residents to still go there for all their FEMA needs.

"We will have officials on hand to walk people through the [filing] procedure," said Martin. "I know that people hate paperwork and the officials on hand can make the job that much easier."

The FEMA office is at 552 59th St., at Sixth Avenue.

Local church healing after act of God

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Parishioners of the tornado-ravaged Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church didn't let the shortage of light diminish their worship on Sunday.

Members of the congregation were just glad to get back in their pews for the first regular service since the tornado twisted through the building on Aug. 8.

"I have heard people say it was a miracle that no one was hurt," said Rev. David Aja-Sigmon. "We all feel so fortunate."

Of course, the church building is a different story.

In one of the tornado's most-

enduring visuals, the church's centerpiece, a 25-foot stained-glass window installed in 1951 was found shattered into a million pieces on the Fourth Avenue sidewalk.

That wasn't the only damage.

During the last seven weeks, the church also had its carpet replaced, the walls redone, and work done on the pews while the congregants prayed on folding chairs in the basement. The final estimates for all the damage aren't in yet, but Aja-Sigmon says that insurance will cover most of it.

"The rest is a matter of faith in us," said Aja-Sigmon. "What more can we ask for?"

"We are going to have to get

creative, but we will be able to handle it," said Aja-Sigmon.

Aja-Sigmon says the repairs will take time. The boarded-up hole that once housed the stained-glass window displays a small photo of the window's former glory. It could take as long as a year before it is restored.

The church won't get any handouts from Uncle Sam — religious institutions are ineligible for FEMA grants — but Aja-Sigmon's spirit is undaunted.

"Everyone is safe and this community has been great to us," said Aja-Sigmon. "What more can we ask for?"



Rev. David Aja-Sigmon stands outside the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, which was devastated by the tornado.

Thieves strike apartment building thrice in one day

By Matthew Lysiak
and Michael Giardina
The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

These crooks had their work cut out for them on Sept. 20.

That's because over the span of three hours they managed to ransack three apartments, all within the same Ovington Avenue building, making off with more than \$5,000 worth of goods.

The team first struck at around 4:30 p.m. The victim told cops that he returned to discover his front door was opened and his apartment, which is near Ridge Boulevard, had been looted of pricey jewelry.

This heist netted the bandits \$550 worth of gold rings. But that apparently wasn't enough for these greedy thieves.

An hour later, the prowlers struck again. In this instance, a 32-year-old victim told cops that her front door had been pried open and her bedroom and den ransacked.

This snafu proved even more lucrative than the first, netting the robbers \$4,360, and a video camera, which was valued at \$500, according to police.

But these neighborhood villains weren't finished yet, although apparently their luck was.

POLICE BLOTTER

They struck a third apartment an hour later, but the 37-year-old resident man told cops that his apartment had been looted, but nothing was stolen.

Cell bandit

A woman's cellphone was stolen out of her hand while she was walking on 79th Street on Sept. 20.

The heist went down at around 4:30 p.m. as the 18-year-old victim was nearing Fourth Avenue. She told cops that a man ran up to her, grabbed her phone, and ran toward Third Avenue.

Purse swipe

A woman had her purse swiped right out of her hands while she was walking on 77th Street on Sept. 22.

The swiper struck at around 2 p.m. when the 60-year-old victim was nearing Fourth Avenue. He came up from behind, grabbed the purse, and hopped into a red sedan that sped off.

The purse held \$800.

62nd Precinct

Prey on senior

Two women fooled an old

scuffle, police said.

The perp jumped back into his black Chrysler four door sedan and sped through three red lights toward Bay Parkway.

Check problems

A business owner had his cash robbed at gun point after exiting a West 10th Street store on 84th Street on Sept. 21.

The 41-year-old contracting company owner was approached by two thugs near Stillwell Avenue at 11:55 a.m. The first perp demanded, "Give me everything you got," and pulled out the black pistol, while the second perp stood as lookout. The owner fished over the \$6,000 and watched as the perps fled down 24th Avenue, police said.

The cash that was stolen was for the payroll of his business.

Two timed

Two Bensonhurst residents had their apartments robbed of cash and jewelry on Sept. 18.

The first break-in was within a West Ninth Street apartment at around 9:15 a.m. The perps broke into the apartment, which is near Avenue P, gaining entry through a window. They swiped \$1,200, electronics and jewelry, police said.

The second break-in was within a 76th Street apartment, which is near 16th Avenue. The thugs broke in at around 10:50 a.m.

through a side window, and stole \$2,000, including some electronics and jewelry, police said.

Unfortunately, there were no witnesses to the break-ins. No word yet from the 62nd precinct if the two incidents were related.

Wedding gift

A man's West 10th Street apartment was burglarized while he was attending his daughters wedding on Sept. 17.

The 66-year-old returned to his apartment, which is near Avenue P, at around 5 p.m. He found a kitchen window and a rear door open, along with \$10,000 and his jewelry stolen, police said.

There were no witnesses.

Delivery debacle

A Chinese food delivery man was beaten and robbed by two punks that bum rushed him within the lobby of a Bay 16th Street lobby on Sept. 17.

The victim entered the lobby of the building, which is near Benson Avenue, and saw a woman waiting for her food. She gave him \$4 and went back to her apartment to get more money. At around 9 p.m., the two thugs entered the lobby, and started to punch, and beat the victim from behind.

The perps searched his pockets and swiped his cash, a cellphone and \$42 worth of Chinese food, police said.

Unearth capsule 46 years early

The Brooklyn Paper

So this is the future? Well, not exactly.

When a group of civic-minded history buffs buried a time capsule on Dec. 11, 2003 to be opened 50 years in the future, few realized they would all live to see the day it was unearthed.

But it was. This week, forty-six years early.

That was the unlikely scene on Monday at the Fort Hamilton Harbor Defense Museum, where the Bay Ridge Sesqui-centennial Committee gathered with local pals behind a crusty tin box they buried only four years ago to commemorate its new, albeit temporary, home.

The fact that this happened is aggravating and absurd," said Committee Co-Chairman Ted General. "But we are really making the best out of a bad situation."

The "situation" is this: the capsule's original burial site, the front lawn of the Bay Ridge Funeral Home, at 7614 Fourth Avenue, was disturbed last month by developers who are tearing it down to

make room for condos. Fortunately, Fort Hamilton stepped to the plate and volunteered to save the capsule until it finds a long-term home.

"I know this was a home—a toasty-nappy experience," said Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge). "But today is a renaissance that the capsule will live to see the day when a new generation can discover its past."

The original idea was to preserve a piece of the past as a way of commemorating Bay Ridge's 150-year anniversary. The group collected newspapers, pictures, photo books, menus, and just about everything to help future generations understand what life was like in the year 2003.

Next, the group chose a burial site. A crystal ball (or, more accurately, a real-estate insider) would have come in handy.

Committee Co-Chairman Peter Killen, who is already in the process of scouting out new spots, learned his lesson: "Next time, it won't be buried on private property. We will find a public place where they won't be building condos." —Lysiak

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Werner Cohn shows off his Moby Dick: the BQE.

He hates the BQE — so he blogs it!

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

The only thing worse than being stuck on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway is being stuck living next to it — and now it's inspired its own blog!

Werner Cohn, who lives on Hicks Street between Amity and Congress streets overlooking six-lanes of BQE chaos in Cobble Hill, has declared (online) war against the commuting crimes he sees out his living room window.

"The truth is, this highway was built before they knew how to build highways," said the 81-year-old retired sociologist, who blogs at bqe-watch.blogspot.com. The Web site's subtitle is "Fatales Waiting to Happen."

Cohn, who also blogs about another neighbor, Long Island College Hospital, is not merely venting. His goal, he says, is prevention. "Are we going to wait for something terrible to happen to do something about it? I'll be minding my own business in the house. Then all of a sudden, I'll hear emergency vehicles, police and sirens, and I look out and boom, there was an accident."

In the last month, Cohn claims to have seen five such crashes within the half-mile of road that surrounds the very tricky Congress Street entrance. The frequency of the accidents vexes him. Now, however, he believes he has stumbled onto a fix: a true acceleration lane.

"The way it is now, I don't use that entrance. Friends of mine don't use that entrance. This will make it a lot safer," he said.

Cohn believes that the state Department of Transportation may like the idea, described in a sketch posted on his blog. "It's an affordable way to solve a dangerous intersection," he said.

Already the blog has gotten people talking. In response to letters from Cohn and Assemblywoman Joan Millman (D-Cobble Hill), a spokesman for the state DOT promised the agency would study improving the entrance. State engineers plan to install an advisory sign warning drivers to slow down as they approach the route's curve, and new lane markings, the spokesman said.

The white-haired blogger learned about virtual activism from his son, architect Jonathan Cohn, who writes about Atlantic Yards and other development at brooklynviews.blogspot.com.

This free finally took notice of its apple. "I didn't understand what he was doing all the time with the computer until I started to do it, too," he said.



John Malkovich was, er, being John Malkovich while filming the new Coen Brothers movie with George Clooney in Brooklyn Heights on Wednesday.

Brooklyn Heights stands in for DC in Coen Brothers film

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

With a little bit of paint, some movie magic and the blessing of the historic preservation society, directors Joel and Ethan Coen transformed State Street into Georgetown.

Not only did the big-screen brothers paint three brownstones pastel colors, but they built two phony facades on existing buildings, added decorative shutters on several others and built a brick wall out of plywood to make the Heights look more like the Washington, DC neighborhood that is the setting for their upcoming film, "Burn After Reading."

Some local residents were ticked off, not just because the production has robbed the block of parking spaces, but also because they didn't like the idea of Brooklyn standing in for someplace else.

"In the beginning, everyone was asking 'Why don't they film in Georgetown?'" said Brooklyn Heights resident Kenny Gross, who has lived on the State Street block between Clinton and Court for 42 years. "But it's only temporary and the movie people have been very nice."

And the movie people love the locals too. "The people of State Street have been wonderful," said Kat Delaney, Location Assistant for the film. Delaney said transforming Brooklyn Heights was easier than dragging the whole production to Georgetown for one shoot — not that it was her decision.

"It was the brothers' choice," Delaney said. "They live in New York, we're only shooting at this location for three days, so why go to Georgetown for three days when we're using a studio here."

The movie will start filming on State Street next week and stars Brad Pitt, George Clooney, John Malkovich and Frances McDormand. The shooting on State Street will wrap up next Friday and everything will go back to normal after that.

"They finish shooting and then I'll start tearing everything down Monday," said Paul Weathered, a set dresser for the film.

Filming actually started a few blocks away this week on Hicks Street between Love Lane and Clark Street. On Wednesday, gawkers of both sexes waited for a glimpse of their favorite heartthrob — Clooney. The rubberneckers were disappointed though: when Clooney emerged for a lunch break, he was whisked away.

Malkovich, by contrast, was friendly, posing for a picture with one fan between takes and hanging around on the street with the commoners when he wasn't on camera.

Robberies, larcenies and muggings ruin all the fun in hipster Billyburg

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Robberies and grand larcenies again led the hit parade in Williamsburg and Bushwick's 90th Precinct last week, with eight heists (up from three during the same week last year) and 16 grand larcenies (up from nine last year).

As in weeks past, the robberies were mostly muggings of people returning home from subways or from bars after dark. Larcenies included a purse snatching at a Laundromat on Bushwick Avenue, and an inside job at an import/export company on Meserole Street.

Despite those spikes, the precinct saw roughly the same amount of crime in the seven major categories (35 incidents this year to 32 last year).

90th BLOTTER

Night mug

A man walking home from the Montrose Avenue L-train station was mugged for his cellphone on Sept. 23, cops said.

The 24-year-old victim told cops that he was near the corner of Montrose Avenue and Humboldt Street at around 1:50 am when the Motorola Razr was ripped from his hand.

He didn't get a good look at the perp, who ran away.

Gang bang

Four men surrounded a man near the corner of Bushwick Avenue and Seigel Street at around 11:30 pm on Sept. 22 and took his cellphone, cops said.

The 39-year-old victim told cops that he didn't get a good look at the men, who were all about 25, he said.

Highwheelin'

A man who tried to enter the subway system through a quiet, unguarded 24-hour turnstile on Sept. 23 was mugged by two men who followed him into the station, cops said.

The victim told cops that he entered the Morgan Avenue station at Harrison Place at around 10:20 pm, but before he could get to the "highwheelers" turnstile, a man put him in a headlock, while his accomplice rifled the victim's pockets, which contained \$100, a Razr

phone and an employee ID from a popular Manhattan-based weekly magazine.

To add injury to insult, the first perp then slugged the victim in the face.

Cops are searching for a 5-foot-8, 160-pound white Hispanic man and a 6-foot, 230-pound black man.

Holy heist!

A South Ninth Street synagogue was robbed of nearly \$1,000, cops said.

An employee of the synagogue, which is between Driggs Avenue and Roehling Street, told cops that the burglary occurred on Aug. 22 at around 6 pm. When he returned to the temple, he noticed that one of the doors had been busted in, and the \$900 was gone.

It is unclear why the synagogue waited several weeks to report the crime.

Robberies up

The 90th Precinct, which covers Williamsburg and Bushwick, has seen a large drop in crime this year. But in the week of Sept. 17-23, there was an uncomfortable spike in robberies and grand larcenies.

Source: NYPD

CATEGORY	2007	2006	% chg
MURDER	0	0	0
RAPE	1	1	0
ROBBERY	8	3	166.6
ASSAULT	2	2	0
BURGLARY	8	15	-46.6
GRAND LARCENY	16	9	77.7
CAR THEFT	0	3	-100

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	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
NORTH FORK LINE	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00

To Brooklyn (Westbound)			
Line	Stops	Ft.	Ft.
MONTAUK LINE	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
NORTH FORK LINE	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00
	4 Bus Stop	0.00	0.00

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NEWS YOU CAN USE ABOUT BROOKLYN SCHOOLS

Want to run the Gibran Academy? Apply now!

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The city is searching for a new principal to head its controversial Arabic language and culture academy, posting the "help wanted" ad on the Department of Education Web site.

The goal is to find a permanent leader for a school that's been mired in a controversy that led to last month's forced resignation of its Yemeni-American, Arabic-speaking founding principal after she defected an "Intifada NYC" T-shirt.

The controversy continued after the principal, Debbie Almontaser, was replaced with a Jewish interim principal who speaks no Arabic.

As with all principal positions, applicants for the job must be certified by New York State. Applicants are also required to respond to a series of questions about their leadership abilities. The salary ranges from \$117,073 to \$119,650.

The acting principal, Danielle Salazar, did not respond to requests for comment as to whether she intended to apply for the job.

She might not get it this time: An Education spokeswoman said that this time around, knowledge of Arabic



Students arrived for the first day of classes at the Gibran Academy earlier this month.

would be considered an asset. "Fluency in Arabic would be a benefit," said the spokeswoman, Melody Meyer. "But it's not a requirement."

Lois Cristillo, assistant professor of Anthropology and Education at Columbia University's Graduate School of Education, said it makes sense to have an Arabic speaker at the helm of an Arabic language academy.

"You'd want someone to be the head of the school who can be a communicator as well as a leader and certainly someone who can be sensitive to the linguistic nuances of a very diverse community," said Cristillo, who has advised some of the key players behind the founding of the school.

Cristillo added that potential Arabic-speaking candidates do exist within the New York City school system.

"There are Arabic-speaking assistant principals in New York City—I know of at least two, and there are also classroom teachers," said Cristillo. The Boerum Hill middle school—the city's first Arabic language and culture academy—managed to open its doors to nearly 60 sixth graders on Sept. 4, despite controversy surrounding the very nature of the

school and the politics of founder Almontaser.

Almontaser was criticized for defending an "Intifada NYC" T-shirt, which is sold by Arab Women Active in Arts and Media, an organization that shares office space with an organization led by Almontaser.

She said the word "Intifada" means "shaking off," and that the T-shirt was intended to promote female empowerment.

After Almontaser resigned, the controversy continued when the Department of Education summoned the inside player Salazar to be the Gibran Academy interim principal.

Former Mayor Ed Koch called the move akin to "spitting in the eye" of the Arabic-speaking community.

The recent job posting did little to mollify Almontaser supporters, who staged a rally last Thursday calling for her rein-

statement. "Debbie [Almontaser] should be the principal of the school," said Mona Edelman, founding director of group behind the inflammatory T-shirt.

She didn't do anything wrong."

She was forced to resign at the height of an anti-Arab and anti-Muslim summer campaign, because unfortunately she wasn't supported by the Department of Education.

Marty plugs an ad school

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

A high school that would train students for careers in advertising will open in Brooklyn next fall if the Department of Education approves a proposal being spearheaded by Borough President Markowitz.

The Boro, who sees himself as Brooklyn's A-1 pilot, says he's been dreaming of an advertising high school for years. Now he's trying to sell the idea to the Bloomberg Administration.

Markowitz announced the idea in a moving forward during "Advertising Week" festivities at Borough Hall on Monday. Flanked by high-powered advertising executives—including Tom Carroll, president of TBWA Worldwide and O. Hunt Duke, president of the American Association of Advertising Agencies—Markowitz declared that "the advertising Mecca of the world has always been a subway ride away, but the subway has been closed to Brooklyn's minority community," which is woefully underrepresented on Madison Avenue.

The deadline for new school proposals is Nov. 28. Markowitz says the proposal is being written, but the details are murky. No location has been chosen, the number of students has not been determined and the total cost is unknown. Markowitz is allocating \$2 million from his budget for classrooms and equipment and says the rest of the money will come from industry leaders and the Department of Education.

Opening a new school in the city is not easy, said Education spokeswoman Melody Meyer. "It's a very rigorous process," But, she said, at the end of last year we [created] 40 new schools," Meyer said.

One of them, of course, was the Khalil Gibran International Academy, the city's first Arabic language and culture school.

Yassky eyes office Campaigns for city comptroller

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Councilman David Yassky—whose hopes to win a seat in Congress were quashed last year by his Council colleague Yvette Katz—has reportedly declared that he will run again, this time to replace city Comptroller Bill Thompson, himself an aspirant for higher office.

By tossing his name into the mix, Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) will face off against four declared candidates for the city's highest financial post: Assemblyman Jim Brennan (D-Park Slope), Councilman Simcha Felder (D-Borough Park), Councilwoman Melinda Katz (D-Midtown), and Councilman David Weprin (D-Queens).

Yassky, who is term-limited and has been having internal discussions with his "kitchen cabinet" about what higher office he should seek next, told The Brooklyn Paper, "My record in the City Council is



David Yassky

perfectly suited to making the most out of the Comptroller position." His run for the office was first reported in the New York Sun.

And he won his first election to the Council in 2001, despite having very short roots in Brooklyn Heights, where he relocated after working as a Congressional staffer in Washington, D.C.

Yassky is no stranger to difficult races. Last year, he ran as the only white candidate in a five-way race to replace retiring Rep. Major Owens (D-Flatbush) in a congressional district that had been created in the 1960s to increase the vot-

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DEM BUMS FROM BKLYN...

Continued from page 1

in the security office. Another security guard, Abdul, also spotted Yankee paraphernalia. I asked him where home plate was. He didn't know.

THAT KIND OF IGNORANCE, the tenants association president. For years, Scott has been calling for Major League Baseball to adopt the city, rather than hold its regular Jackie Robinson commemorations at stadiums all over the country—anywhere but at the place where Robinson actually changed the world.

In April, we had a commemoration for the 60th anniversary of Jackie breaking the color barrier, but no one from Major League Baseball showed up," she said. "There were events at every stadium, but no one came to where Jackie Robinson actually played."

A little while later, Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries did show up, holding a virtually unattended press conference. It was just me and News 12 to also chide Major League Baseball.

Jeffries said that the "Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities" program (RBI) has distributed grants in 200 cities nationwide—and funds nine programs in



At the McDonald's restaurant nearest the Ebbs Field houses, pictures remind diners of Brooklyn's Dodger past.

New York—but Brooklyn hasn't seen a dime, Jeffries said.

Borough President Markowitz, donning an ill-fitting Dodgers cap, also joined the event, calling for more respect

for the site of Ebbs Field. He promised a statue of Jackie Robinson so that "the young people can know what he did for Brooklyn and for everyone."

The press conference broke



Ironically, ball playing—among other things—is not allowed at the Ebbs Field houses.



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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

September 29, 2007

Have your 'Cake'

A little sweet, a little sour; the Sea and Cake to rock the Warsaw

By Sarah McCormick
for The Brooklyn Paper

Even in a neighborhood known for its bakeries, a piece of cake can be a welcome addition.

Touring in support of their first full-length album in four years, "Everybody," the Sea and Cake, the Chicago-based indie pop band, will hit the Warsaw on Sept. 29, the latest in a string of high-profile shows at the sleepy club which is tucked into the Polish National Home.

"A bigger audience helps, because longtime fans know all of the songs, and it makes it fun for us," said guitarist and vocalist Sam Prekop. It shouldn't be a problem for them to pack the house, since after 14 years of making music together, the band has gathered quite a following.

"The Sea and Cake is ultimate soundtrack for a dinner party with a friend or three. How classy and refined their music is makes up for the lack of class in your friends or grungy New York apartment," said Jesse Cannon, a freelance record producer living in Cribble Hill. But until recently, Prekop wasn't so sure himself. "We always have a set of ideas that fall away and become completely worthless," he said. "I can't count how many times I've said I want to make a blues-rock album and it never happened."

He even admitted to GO Brooklyn that it took two months of listening before "Everybody" began to grow on him. "I needed time away from it, but once I took a break and I was able to hear it in a different light, I really liked it."

But the record has found favor with the band's fans. James Bradley, owner of Williamsburg's Sound Fix record store confirms, "It's been a steady seller and it was in our top 10 for many weeks." And as for the all-important Pitchfork.com rating, "Everybody" scored a 7.6, which is no small feat on the notoriously picky Web site.

This time around, Sea and Cake turned to an outsider, Brian Paulson, to produce the record. Until now, the knobs were twiddled by drummer John McEntire.

"We decided we needed the input of someone outside of the band because we're always a complete, self-contained unit," said Prekop.



Sea and be scene: Archer Prewitt, Sam Prekop, Eric Claridge and John McEntire bring their act to Brooklyn on Sept. 29 to the delight of bespectacled, sensitive types citywide.

MUSIC

The Sea and Cake will play at 9 pm on Sept. 29 at the Warsaw at the Polish National Home (251 Driggs Ave., between Edford and Leonard streets in Greenpoint). Tickets are \$20. For information, call (718) 387-0505.

"There's a very subtle aesthetic difference — it wasn't radically different, but the changes added up and that's what we were going for."

"Everybody" manages to be both mellow and poppy at the same time. Tracks like "Up On Crutches" build layers of warm, playful sounds, transitioning into an upbeat, foot-tapping favorite, while songs like "Translucent," which closes out the album, returns with the melodious, dreamlike qualities Sea and Cake fans expect.

"We don't predetermine a direction, we just take what's coming, so the records always represent a very specific time," he said. "We never have stuff just lying around waiting to record. [Our songs] are very project-specific — the records are cohesive in that sense."

As the members continue their side projects, from painting, books and comics to solo projects and recording studios, the Sea and Cake's ship continues to sail. "I think it just boils down to if you want to do it enough it works itself out," Prekop said.

The algo-rhythm

Sure, everybody seems to love the Sea and Cake, but what do they really sound like? GO Brooklyn, using very scientific methods, has deconstructed the band's latest record to give you an idea of what you can expect from its Sept. 29 concert at Warsaw. Additionally, thanks to technology borrowed from NASA, if you press your ear to the page, you'll be able to hear tracks from the album. Seriously, just try it. — SM



Take the hypnotic magnetism of Radiohead's 1995 album, "The Bends," and add...



...the sweet acoustic dreaminess of Pinback's self-titled record. Toss in a bit of...



...Yo La Tengo's pop sensibility, apparent on 1997's "I Can Hear the Heart Beating as One" to get...



...The Sea and Cake's most recent release, "Everybody."

ART



Glow getter

The Brooklyn Academy of Music is about to get a whole lot brighter — and it has nothing to do with a fancy new marquee.

Beginning Oct. 2, light sculptor Leo Villareal (pictured) will flip the switch on "Stars," a creation made specifically for BAM's main building.

The piece consists of five 10-foot round metal wheels, each containing 48 spokes and 2,880 tiny LED lights. Can't do the math? That's 14,400 customized miniature bulbs, enough to make the project visible from the street below.

"The points of light are as small as a grain of rice, but extremely bright," said Villareal, who is widely known for his twinkling exhibitions in far-flung locales like Korea, China and Buffalo. "It's very elegant and low profile."

The lights, which will blink until Dec. 16, were conceived as a way to light up the building from the inside out.

"We wanted to illuminate the building," said BAM curator David Harper. "But unlike the Museum of Modern Art, we can't do projections."

Working inside was fine by Villareal. "I really responded to the arches and geometry of the place," he said. "Responding and taking cues from what is already there is really important to me."

"Stars" will be on display through Dec. 16 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (20 Lafayette Ave., at Ashland Place in Fort Greene). Free. For information, visit www.bam.org. — Juliana Bunim

NIGHTLIFE

Sukkah punch

After all the fasting and repenting of Yom Kippur, some Jews are ready to kick back and have fun.

And on Sunday, Sept. 30, Rabbi Simcha Weinstein (pictured) of Congregation B'nai Avraham will help them do just that by trotting out cigars and whisky.

Crowded beneath what Weinstein called Downtown Brooklyn's largest sukkah — a hut made from branches and leaves — these happy hour Hebrews will partake in single malt Scotch and premium tequila while they puff on high-end cigars.

"Rabbis normally don't condone smoking," said Weinstein, a hipper-than-thou rabbi who likes to put the "gan" back into religion. "That's why I'm not speaking [at the event]."

In his place, Elliot Zweig, of the Middle East Media Research Institute, and our own Gersh Kuntzman will be handling the hosting duties.

"Simcha Weinstein has dedicated his life to bringing me closer to God," said Kuntzman. "That's impossible, of course, so we've compromised on having him bring me closer to whisky."

Kuntzman said he is "an expert" on both Scotch and Irish whisky thanks to "several years of intense research."

Weinstein told GO Brooklyn that he was looking to appeal to guys who are "a little yuppified and a little metrosexual. You can quote me on that."

"Sometimes," he added, "it's fun to let loose." "Brooklyn Heights Sukkot Gentlemen's Evening" will take place at 8 pm on Sept. 30 at Congregation B'nai Avraham (117 Remsen St., between Henry and Clinton streets in Brooklyn Heights). Tickets are \$54. For information, call (718) 596-4840. — Daniel Goldberg

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The Brooklyn Paper / David J. Phillip

Don't pass this torch

When Frank and Peter Costabile built the kitchen at Il Torchio, their new Fort Greene restaurant, they didn't only shop for new hardware, they also hand-picked a chef from one of Brooklyn's favorite Mediterranean spots. Charles Giangarra, formerly a chef at Park Slope's Convivium Osteria, is now manning the stove at Il Torchio, putting his signature touch on all of its dishes. Giangarra specializes in seafood, with small plate servings of grilled baby octopus over greens, and pan-seared sea scallops atop spicy chickpea puree and fried polenta. Entrées include roasted Cornish game hen with Yukon gold potatoes and grilled zucchini.

For dessert, diners can take a square of the house special, tiramisu, baked by Peter's wife, Irene, and, at least until the weather bottoms out, eat their finale in the 50-seat, brick-paved garden.

The garden, like the rest of the space, was

built by the Costabiles, who own the building. It took eight months to transform the space, formerly a store, into a rustic, 30-seat Italian bistro, but the effort shows. Now, with the bar and wine racks made from recycled ceiling beams and floor boards hauled in from an old barn, Il Torchio is a showcase for Giangarra's regional Italian menu and the carefully chosen, all-Italian wine list.

Attention to detail is apparent in every aspect of the restaurant; here's hoping that diners notice it, too. *Il Torchio* (458 Myrtle Ave., between Washington and Waverly avenues in Fort Greene) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Entrées: \$6-\$30. The restaurant serves lunch and dinner daily. Subway: G to Clinton/Washington. For information, call (718) 422-1122. — Tina Barry

It's got Mex appeal

New Mexican spot spices up the DUMBO dining scene

By Tina Barry
For The Brooklyn Paper

For a long time Pedro's, a divey spot on Jay Street in DUMBO, was the neighborhood's prime spot for Mexican food. Authentic and inexpensive, the restaurant quickly became out of place among its high-rise, high-priced neighbors — but it was all the more charming for it.

But last spring Anna Castellani, the owner of the DUMBO General Store, just two blocks from Pedro's, decided to give it a run for its money. Putting chef Daniel Mena in the kitchen and General Manager Ethan Smith behind the bar, the unassuming art-supply store turned coffee, lunch and brunch venue became a sophisticated space for authentic "antojitos," or Mexican tapas, with modern cocktails to match.

"We wanted to create something that reflects the cooking and performance spaces of urban Mexico today, and combat the stereotype of Mexico being this impoverished place void of contemporary culture," said Smith. Beginning in March, the General Store threw a four-night-a-week eating series, and called it Hecho en DUMBO (which translates to "made in DUMBO"). When the demand for the evenings grew, Castellani decided to go for six nights each week.

Diners — who normally



The Brooklyn Paper / David J. Phillip

flee DUMBO after dark for more choices in Brooklyn Heights or beyond — kept streaming in to enjoy Mena's cooking. The chef, who grew up in Mexico City and has a degree from the French Culinary Institute, created a menu that utilized organic produce from the nearby Forager's Market and Mexican provisions come from the Essex Street Market on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

In keeping with contempo-

rary Mexican fare, Mena's small plates and entree-sized dishes are lighter than Mexican food we've come to know in the States. Ingredients are used judiciously, not heaped on the plate, so the flavors are clean and distinct.

Starting out, the "sopes," crisp rounds of stone ground yellow cornmeal, get a smear of black bean puree and homemade "crema fresca" so their pleasantly grainy texture isn't masked by the other elements. Guacamole is a lush, chunky and well-salted mix, made to



The Brooklyn Paper / David J. Phillip

Pica these: The "picaditas de jalapa," crisp corn rounds topped with crab, avocado and jalapeño oil, are among the small plates available at the DUMBO General Store's "Hecho en DUMBO" dining nights.

tequila that's meant to be gulped down," said Smith. "We use the finest tequila available, and drinking it is an entirely different experience." In a deconstructed Bloody Mary with a south-of-the-border accent, the liquor is served in a shot glass and meant to be sipped slowly. Its partner is a tomato juice "chaser" made spicy with lime and "Valentina" a traditional Mexican hot sauce.

Back on the plate, I'd skip the least interesting of the "molletes" (little appetizers), the "mollete defecito." Warm black bean puree and mozzarella topped with "pico de gallo" (a spicy Spanish relish) on ciabatta bread is reminiscent of bread bruschetta.

Instead, pick the "picaditas de jalapa," two little "sopes" topped with fresh, sweet shreds of Dungeness crab. The delicate shellfish meat is played off by slices of avocado and contrasted with a drizzle of hot jalapeño oil.

Just as delightful is the "ensalada rosaura," a slaw of cabbage in a sprightly citrus

dressing. The light dish includes a sprinkling of mild queso fresco and hibiscus flowers that look like copper colored shards and taste like lemony potato chips.

The duck mole is a standout, must-have dish. Mena employs duck leg cooked in its own fat, and the richness of

DINING

Hecho En DUMBO (the DUMBO General Store, 111 Front St., between Washington and Adams streets in DUMBO) accepts cash only. Dishes: \$8-\$17. Dinner is served Monday through Saturday, 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. For information, call (718) 855-5288 or visit www.hechoendumbo.com.

the game and crispness of its skin is evident even beneath a layer of multi-dimensional mole sauce. With a side of moist, jalapeño-spiked rice, the dish is an event in itself.

While diners gather around the two long communal and smaller, private tables, Mexican singers softly croon in the front of the space. There's a feeling of something intimate unfolding, a salon of sorts that melds sophisticated elements of Mexican and American nightlife.

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A fresh art

Renovation and innovation breathe new life into a Brooklyn landmark

By Trav S.D.
for The Brooklyn Paper

On Broadway in Williamsburg, where the luxury condominiums and boutiques begin to give way to low-rise buildings and 99-cent stores, the newly restored Williamsburg Art and Historical Center is attempting to establish itself as an anchor of the community.

Sitting in the shadow of the Williamsburg Bridge, the building — built in 1867 as the Kings County Savings Bank — has the look of a haunted mansion. With its recent \$200,000-plus renovation and the Sept. 29 opening of “Sun Pictures to Megapixels,” its first exhibition in four years, locals should find the spot more welcoming.

“It’s spectacular,” said Craig Morrison, an architectural historian who worked on the building’s restoration. “The rooms have very high ceilings and can accommodate big works and it’s flooded with light; it’s a jaw-dropper and is one of the most spectacular spaces in the city.”

The Center was founded in 1996 by artist Yuko Nii, who had the foresight to purchase the building at the same time. So, even when the fledgling center was in fits and starts — thanks to the building’s landmark status, even installing a fire escape took years of maneuvering through red tape — it still had a headquarters.

A roof overhead didn’t guarantee that all would be well inside. “Be-



Arty animals: Williamsburg Art and Historical Center curator Joel Simpson and founder Yuko Nii preparing for the Center’s upcoming photography show in the renovated building on Broadway and Bedford Avenue.

cause I was able to purchase this building, artists always assumed I had deep pockets,” said Nii. “In reality, when we opened, I had \$50 in the bank. Because we were operating on a shoestring, many artists were unhappy with the fact that, beyond the space itself, I had little to offer them, and word got

around.” Nii declined to say how much the building cost to begin with, but Center President Terry Lindall said, “It was a steal at the time because the neighborhood was really rundown. There was none of what you see today.” Despite its initial troubles, the



ART

“Sun Pictures to Megapixels: Archaic Process to Digital Process Photography” will open on Sept. 29 at the Williamsburg Art and Historical Center (135 Broadway, at Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg). The Center opens at noon, and a reception will be held from 4-6 p.m. For information, call (718) 486-7372 or visit www.wahcenter.net.

said Morrison. “The interior was remarkably untouched so it has gas chandeliers hanging in place, and the ambience: it’s like walking into a time capsule.”

With the upcoming exhibition, the same old world charm is in effect. The work of 117 photographers is included, some using the archaic techniques of early photography and others working with cutting-edge digital methods.

“We’re showing the bookends of Modernism,” said curator Joel Simpson. “I first proposed this show three years ago and it got put on hold because of the construction, but it was worth waiting for. This space is tremendous, a perfect setting for these photos.”

The space is surely impressive, but in a finicky corner of the neighborhood, where million-dollar lofts about crumbling tenements, the Center might struggle to draw a crowd. Unlike Williamsburg’s artsy North side, the Center straddles a crossroads of cultures that are still learning to accept one another.

“The Center is at that critical point where all of the communities come together,” said Morrison. “They’re fully aware of it and want to speak to all of the communities at once.”

Nii is convinced that the hipsters, Hasidim and Hispanics will all be drawn to the center.

“Our symbol is a bridge,” she said. “Not only are we located at the base of the Williamsburg Bridge, but we want to be a bridge between cultures, between artists, between human beings and between the past and the future.”

Center amassed impressive successes. Over the decade, the three floors of open space have hosted more than 170 fine art exhibitions and 140 performing arts events.

Artists whose work has been presented there range from the respected sculptor Isamu Noguchi to the notorious fetish photographer Charles Gatewood, and the atmos-

pheric old structure has been used for film locations by Robert DeNiro and Chris Rock. “It looks like what moviemakers would call a Soho artist’s loft,”

Aria listening?

After a summer of laying low, the Regina Opera Company is dusting off its pipes for its 38th season, beginning Sunday, Sept. 30. Opera fans won’t need their Viking hats and opera glasses just yet, since first show will be a concert combining classic opera with Broadway tunes from crowd favorites like “West Side Story.”

“The concerts are aimed at introducing people to the Regina Opera Company,” said Francine Gerber, Regina’s executive vice president. “For people who are afraid of the opera, this is just a taste.”

If you can’t commit to a full opera, there are five additional Sunday matinee concerts, each with a unique bill including opera, Broadway and international tunes.

But who could be afraid of the borough’s most dedicated opera company?

“Our main goal is to expose people to opera,” said Gerber, adding that regular opera tickets are \$20 and concert tickets are \$10 — pocket change for some seriously rich family fun.

This season the professional company — “Call us anything you want,” said Garber, “just don’t call us an ‘amateur’ opera” — will perform “Rigoletto,” “La Traviata” and “Il Trovatore,” all by Verdi and all accompanied by a full 30-piece orchestra. (So much for amateur opera!) If the pop opera concerts whet your appetite, Regina is also offering a full schedule of traditional opera fare. This season’s Verdi lineup, said Garber, will prove to audiences that they are already familiar with the songs. “You walk out of a Verdi opera humming the tunes,” said Garber. “How could you go to ‘Rigoletto’ and not leave humming ‘La Donna E Mobile?’” “Opera + Pops” will be performed on Sept. 30 at 3 p.m. at The Regina Opera Company (12th Avenue and 65th Street in Dyker Heights). For information and a full schedule, visit www.reginaopera.org.

— Juliana Bunim



Reel finds

Harold Schellinx is certainly dedicated to his art. If I wasn’t sure before, watching him tug at a sewage grate near the Nassau Avenue G train station hammered it home.

“There is probably less than a second of sound on [this],” said Schellinx, pinching his thumb and forefinger together (pictured). He was talking about the segment of cassette tape — yes, it still exists — that he had wrestled from the grate. For Schellinx, this was a find.

The 50-year-old artist, who created the ongoing “Found Tapes Exhibition,” which features audio montages of tape segments he has found, was cleaning up

in Brooklyn. Schellinx was in town for the “Conflux Festival,” a conceptual art festival which organizers cryptically described as “festival of psychogeography, the investigation of everyday urban life through emerging artistic, technological and social practice.” His practice of creating found art audio montages fit right in at the festival.

Throughout the course of the weekend-long festival, Schellinx received leads from several Brooklynites who had spotted tape on their own.

One of the festival’s organizers found a nest of tape on her block, but more often than

not, Schellinx was searching near the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, where, he said, “many of the tapes have just been thrown out of cars.”

And while some of them might have been tossed out quite a while ago, he still managed to take quite a haul. Over the four days of the festival, Schellinx found 20 tapes.

Despite his love for tapes, Schellinx doesn’t eschew technology. “I’m not an analog purist,” he said. “I’m not somebody who is nostalgic about the things of the past. It’s just a material that I like to work with.”

Harold Schellinx’s Found Tapes Exhibition can be heard at www.Brooklyn-Paper.com. — Jane Kim



Tucker Reed,
executive director of the DUMBO Improvement District

My little brother is 8 years younger than me, so obviously I roughed him up a little bit. Once I was teaching him to box, so I was down on my knees — he was three years old — and he hauled off and hit me right in the nose. I was bleeding everywhere.

Ella Weiss,
president of the Brooklyn Arts Council

I’ve got road rage all the time!

Jed Valentas,
vice president of Two Trees Management

I don’t think I’ve ever been in a legitimate fight, but I’ve been a party to fights at basketball games and I was severely threatened a couple of times in my Yankee regalia at baseball games in Fenway Park.

Lars Schlichting,
owner Half Pint

I was in Prague, and there were two of us fighting 10 English soccer hooligans. They kicked me in the eye and I couldn’t see for a week!

Yasser Darwish,
dancer

In Egypt, I had a fight when someone bothered a girl who was with me. He came with his friends and it was a real fight. I beat him up and damaged his face but he came back with some knives. I was in a bad situation until some of my friends came to help me.

David Valentas,
DUMBO development titan

For me, life is war every day.

BROOKLYN BASH

Let’s get ready to DUMBO

It was a steamy night at St. Ann’s Warehouse last week when the DUMBO Improvement District hosted “DUMBO Fight Night” party, a fundraiser for the formerly industrial nabe. In keeping with the night’s theme, a boxing ring was set up in the middle of the room, and various acts — dancers, rappers and, off to the side, developers in a dunk tank (pictured at left) — amused the crowd.

When we weren’t shoving the fancy food, which was being pushed around in carts like at a real fight, into our maws, we were asking partygoers what the worst fight they had ever been in was.

— Adam Rathe

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NY Methodist takes aim at sickle cell disease

New York Methodist Hospital

Research shows that roughly two million Americans, or one in 12 African-Americans, carry the sickle cell trait, yet public awareness of sickle cell disease is very low.

To help educate the community on the serious nature of the disease, the month of September is recognized as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month.

In observance of this occasion, the Sickle Cell-Thalassemia Program at New York Methodist Hospital in Park Slope held a free information fair aimed at spreading the word about sickle cell disease.

Sickle cell disease and thalassemia are inherited diseases of the blood. Sickle cell disease is characterized by the production of abnormal hemoglobins while thalassemia is characterized by reduced amounts of hemoglobin.

Symptoms can be mild or severe, sometimes requiring frequent emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

"Patient education is key because no matter how benign the disease may seem, sickle cell is a very serious and unpredictable disease," said Rita Bellevue, MD, director of the hospital's Sickle Cell-Thalassemia Program.

Sickle cell disease is most often seen among people with African, African-American, Caribbean, Hispanic, Italian, Greek, Asian Indian, and Arab backgrounds. Thalassemia most often affects those with Greek, Italian, Asian Indian, Asian, African or African-American backgrounds, as well as those from the Caribbean and Hispanic countries.

Because the altered genes causing sickle cell disease and thalassemia are inherited through many generations and are more likely to occur among

certain populations, it is important to find out if you have either of these diseases or if you might have a trait that could cause you to pass the disease on to your children.

"It is essential that people know whether they carry the sickle cell trait because, while they may not show symptoms, they can pass the trait on to their children," said Bellevue. A simple blood test can determine your hemoglobin status.

At NYM, medical professionals associated with the hospital's Sickle Cell-Thalassemia Program are dedicated to the diagnosis, management and treatment of people with sickle cell disease and thalassemia. The program provides comprehensive health care and treatment

for pediatric, adolescent and adult patients.

"Along with providing comprehensive clinical care, we focus very heavily on helping our patients and their families become aware of the characteristics, complications and treatment options associated with the disease," said Bellevue.

The program offers parent and patient support groups, management during hospitalization,

pain management, individual and family counseling, pediatric stroke prevention, and genetic counseling among others.

Pediatric care, immunizations and well baby check-ups are also available for the siblings of children who are enrolled in the program.

For more information on the Methodist's Sickle Cell-Thalassemia Program, call (718) 857-5643.

Lead tests by Lutheran

Lutheran Medical Center

The Lutheran Family Health Centers School Health Program now offers rapid lead testing at 10 of its school health sites.

Using the rapid test, providers can deliver blood lead results equivalent to those reported by outside laboratories in just three minutes.

Since the beginning of August, millions of products containing unsafe levels of lead paint have been recalled. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Americans should expect more recalls in the coming months.

Lead testing is entirely preventable. However, if untreated it can cause learning and behavior problems. The key is early detection through screening and immediate intervention when testing identifies elevated blood-lead levels.

Young children often place their toys, fingers, and other objects in their mouths as part of their normal development. This hand-to-mouth activity can result in lead poisoning from sucking on or swallowing toys with lead or objects with lead dust.

ESA Biosciences, Inc., a Magellan Biosciences company, developed the rapid lead test, LeadCare II, with a grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

As one of the largest family health center systems in the country, Lutheran played a key role in the critical study that led to the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approval in 2006.

For lead-poisoning facts and links to rapid information and other important lead-poisoning resources, please visit www.easa.com/leadcare

Lutheran Family Health Center's encourages its community to get to know their school health program and have their children tested for lead. Since 1984, the Lutheran Family Health Centers network has operated the program, which provides comprehensive medical, mental health and dental services in several schools.

With 14 school health centers sites, it's the largest in Brooklyn. A team of nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pediatricians, mental health providers, dental professionals, and medical assistants are available during normal school hours.

Lead testing is available at the following school health sites: **PS 1**, The Bergen School, Sunset Park; **PS 10**, Magnet School of Math, Science and Design Technology, Park Slope; **PS 15**, Patrick F. Daly, Red Hook; **PS 24**, Sunset Park; **PS 94**, The Henry Longfellow, Sunset Park; **PS 149**, Sunset Park School, Sunset Park; **PS 172**, Beacon School of Excellence, Sunset Park; **PS 503/506** (formerly PS 314), Sunset Park; **PS 307/M.S. 313**, Daniel Hale Williams and Satellite West Middle School, Brooklyn Heights 10; **PS 282**, Park Slope School, Park Slope (pending).

Learn more about your school's on-site health clinic by calling the Lutheran Family Health Centers' (LFHC) at (718) 630-8755 or the External Affairs Department at (718) 630-7155.

The Lutheran Family Health Centers (LFHC), based in Sunset Park, is a federally qualified community-based ambulatory health care system affiliated with Lutheran HealthCare. Governed by the Sunset Park Health Center, Inc., and serving southwest Brooklyn, LFHC is one of the largest health center networks in the country. With nine full-time community health centers, eight medical partnerships, 14 school-based health centers and community programs, including three WIC programs, adult and family literacy programs, three child care centers and a family wellness center, the network has served as Brooklyn's medical home for more than 60 years.

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Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 20th day of September, 2007, bearing Index Number N50083/2007, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Katash Patsianos. My present name is Katash Anica Vasco, a/k/a Katash Patsianos. My present address is 7900 5th Ave, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, New York 11209. My place of birth is Puerto Rico. My date of April 10, 1979.
Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 18th day of September, 2007, bearing Index Number N50082/2007, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Toris Stone. My present name is Shabek Stone. My present address is 2263 8th St., #205, Brooklyn, New York 11214. My place of birth is Brooklyn, NY. My date of birth is April 2, 1995.

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